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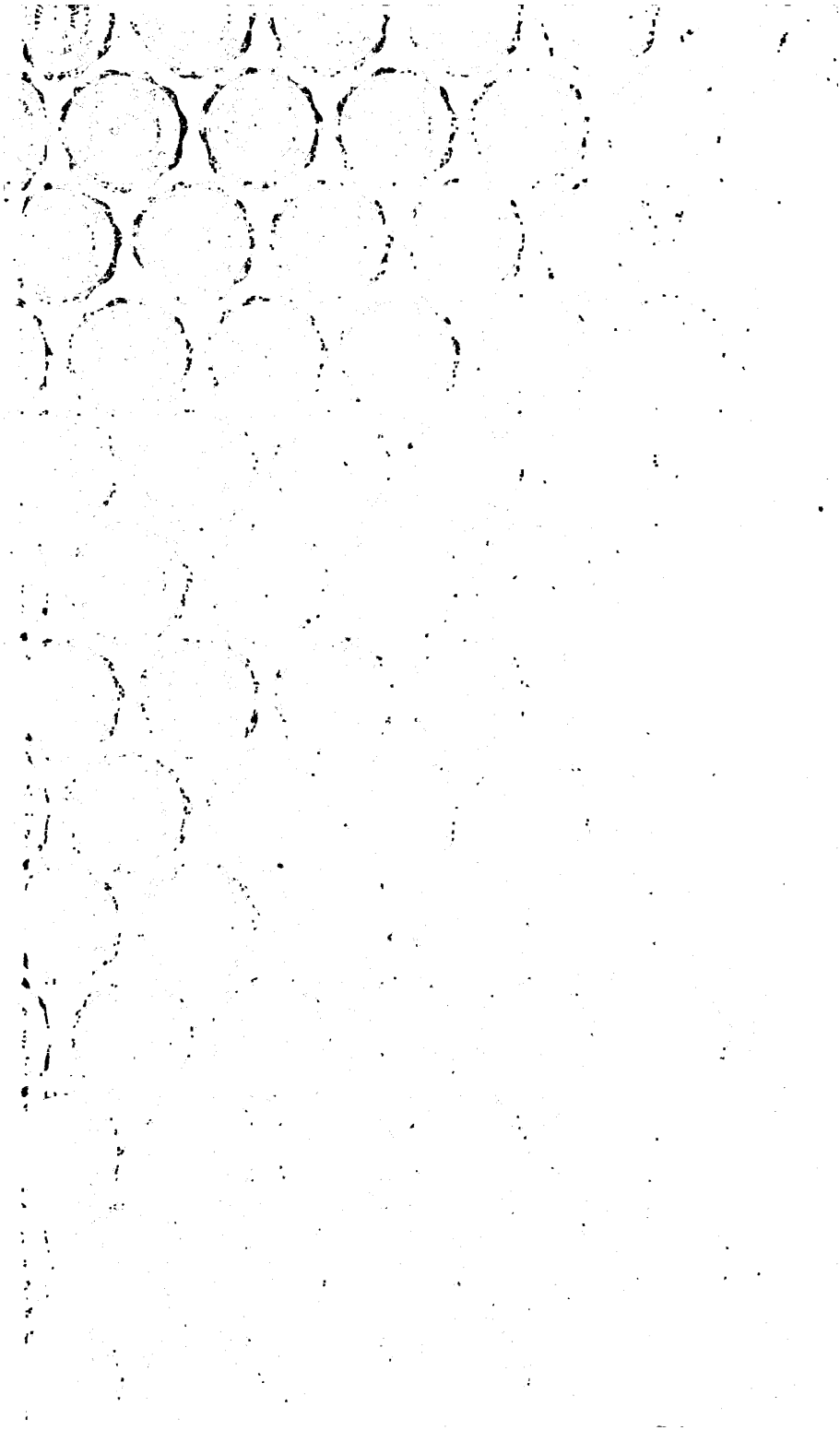

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NOTES

ON THE

WEST INDIES:

WRITTEN DURING THE

EXPEDITION UNDER THE COMMAND

OF THE LATE

GENERAL SIR RALPH ABERCROMBY:

INCLUDING OBSERVATIONS ON

THE ISLAND OF BARBADOES,

AND THE SETTLEMENTS CAPTURED BY THE BRITISH TROOPS, UPON

THE COAST OF GUIANA;

LIKEWISE REMARKS RELATING TO THE

CREOLES AND SLAVES OF THE WESTERN COLONIES, AND

THE INDIANS OF SOUTH AMERICA:

WITH OCCASIONAL HINTS, REGARDING

The Seasoning, or Yellow Fever

OF HOT CLIMATES.

By GEORGE PINCKARD, M. D.

OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS,

DEPUTY INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF HOSPITALS TO HIS MAJESTY'S FORCES,

AND PHYSICIAN TO THE BLOOMSBURY DISPENSARY.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

It is a ſtrange thing that in ſea-voyages, where there is nothing to be ſeene, but ſky and ſea, men ſhould make diaries; but in land-trauaile, wherin ſo much is to bee obſerued, for the moſt part they omit it; as if chance were fitter to be regiſtered than obſeruation. LORD VERULAM.

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LETTER I.

Author apprehenſive of having wearied his friend with the detail of his river excurſion. Report of the ſick-liſt during his abſence. A valuable and friendly compagnon de voyage. Some remarks on down and feathers. Author and his friends beſieged with interrogatories. Happy tidings from Grenada and St. Vincent. Improbable report of the commander in chief proceeding againſt Guadaloupe. Capture of Sir Sidney Smith by the French. Corps of South American Rangers. A large ſnake. Mermaids.

Berbiſche, July.

I AM too ſenſible, my friend, that in my laſt noting communication I ſuffered myſelf to be led into minutiæ, regarding our late excurſion, which might be more tedious than entertaining to you: but as my pen was my companion in the deep woods, and as I thought to you, while noting each circumſtance on the ſpot, where it occurred, I afterwards knew not what part to ſuppreſs, and therefore hazarded a ſevere trial of your patience by impoſing upon you the taſk of peruſing the whole; yet not without a hope that, as the mode of travelling, and every thing connecting with the excurſion, differed, tota facie, from what

is common in Europe, the novelty might in ſome meaſure compenſate the wearifome detail.

It will give you much pleaſure to learn that the hoſpital liſt had not been augmented during my abſence, and that the troops in this colony ſtill continue even more healthy, than our beſt expectations had led us to hope.

You know my attachment to the friendly little mattreſs, which I brought from England as my compagnon de voyage, and you will believe that its value has not been diminiſhed by my often finding it the ſoothing aſſociate of my toils. Never were its calm aſſuaſions more eagerly embraced, nor more gratefully enjoyed than on the evening of my return from our tour. After paſſing three diſtreſsful nights in an open hammock, aſſailed with the bites and ſtings of whole tribes of inſects, I extended my perſon, at eaſe, on my kindly mattreſs, and, ſhielded by my canopy, and curtains of gauze, bade defiance to the buzzing hoſts which thirſted for my blood. The power of lying undiſturbed, and of extending my ſwoln and wearied limbs unmoleſted, was quite a conqueſt; and, perhaps, but few things, even of greater moment, ever brought ſuch real

comfort, ſuch unalloyed enjoyment to any individual as I experienced from this trivial circumſtance. You will form ſome judgment of it, when I tell you that I had been bitten from head to foot by inſects, and had been expoſed to the fatigue of four days travelling in a ſcorching climate, beſides paſſing three ſucceſſive nights, not only without ſleep, but hung up in an open hammock, with my tortured, tumefied, and itching body expoſed to the bites and ſtings of new aſſailants.

The great and happy change I felt, ſo occupied my contemplations, that for a time, I reſiſted the invitations of Morpheus, and lay in quiet watchfulneſs to obſerve the enraged thouſands, that beat their wings in diſappointment againſt the defending barrier of my couch.

In truth may I ſay that I afterwards repoſed, throughout the night, in ſweet and balmy ſleep, and that I roſe in the morning with increaſed affection for my friendly matreſs: figuratively ſpeaking it was a bed of the ſoftneſt down! You already know that a real bed of down would have had no charms in my eſtimation. Indeed my increaſing experience

confirms the ſurprize you have often heard me expreſs, that ſuch multitudes of perſons ſhould have adopted the pernicious cuſtom of exhauſting their ſtrength, by paſſing long nights buried in the unwholeſome heat of down and feathers.

You will readily conceive the avidity with which our comrades demanded an account of our excurſion and adventures. They crowded round us upon our arrival, beſieging us with vollies of interrogatories, and eagerly liſtening to our recitals. Every one had ſomething new to aſk, and from the varied forms of nearly ſimilar queſtions, the two or three firſt days were moſtly ſpent in repeating the details of our journey.

We, on our part, were equally ſolicitous to learn the news of the Iſlands and of England, but were diſappointed in all our inquiries, no intelligence having reached the colony during our abſence. Since our return a veſſel has arrived from Barbadoes, with the happy tidings that our troops have ſubdued the Brigands and the Charibs of Grenada and St. Vincent, and that theſe iſlands are reſtored to order and tranquillity. It is further added that

the commander in chief is gone with the army againſt Guadaloupe; but this we regard only as the idle rumour of the hour, for when we conſider the very advanced period of the ſeaſon, and that the troops have been already fatigued and reduced in number, by the campaign in the other iſlands, and by furniſhing theſe with the neceſſary garriſons, it does not ſeem probable that an attack can be meditated, this ſeaſon, upon the enemy's ſtrongeſt poſition.

From the kind attentions of our hoſpitable and friendly neighbour Mr. Blair, we have now before us a ſeries of Engliſh newspapers up to May 12th. You already know that the peruſal of theſe is one of our higheſt enjoyments—one of our greateſt ſources of delight. Not a ſentence, nor a word eſcapes us. We read with great concern the unfortunate defeat of our brave allies the Auſtrians, and we much apprehend that this event will remove every proſpect of peace for the preſent.

We are alſo much grieved to read that the gallant Sir Sidney Smith is captured by the enemy: for we are not without our fears, that, from the nature of the enterprize in which

he was engaged, he may become the victim of revolutionary rage; or, that the ſanguinary rulers who have uſurped the government in France, not poſſeſſing that magnanimity of mind which honors the enterpriſing valour of an enemy, but being meanly exaſperated by his intrepidity, may ſubject him to hardſhips unknown to ordinary captives.

From Demarara we learn that it is in contemplation to form a corps of negroes for the defence of the colony, to conſiſt of 350 or 400 men, and to be denominated the "South American rangers." Should this plan be put into execution, it will, probably, open a field of promotion for the junior officers of the regiments now ſerving in Guiana; but it is ſuppoſed that moſt of the companies will be given to ſuch of the planters who ſhall volunteer their ſervices; in order to create a colonial ſpirit in the corps, and to ſtrengthen it as much as poſſible with local intereſt. A body of troops thus conſtituted would form, perhaps, the beſt and moſt diſpoſable force, that could be eſtabliſhed for the defence of this coaſt.

I ſhould not omit telling you that a few days ſince I had an opportunity of ſeeing one

of the race of enormous ſnakes, which you read of as infeſting theſe colonies. It was killed near the town of New Amſterdam,—was twelve feet long, and about the thickneſs of a man's thigh. To the Europeans who were preſent, it appeared a very large, and hideous reptile; but neither the coloniſts, nor the negroes conſidered it of extraordinary ſize, for we learn that they are ſometimes ſeen more than twice as large, and upwards of thirty feet in length.

I wiſh I could relate to you a converſation which I heard at the governor's a few days ago on the ſubject of mermaids. It was maintained that theſe lady-like animals, of fabulous note, do really exiſt in the Berbiſche river, and I confeſs that I experienced ſome ſurpriſe, when I heard the governor, who is a ſenſible and intelligent man, give his ſanction to the opinion. Often, it was inſiſted, *very* often had they been ſeen; and on my aſking the gentlemen who advanced the aſſertion, if it was by their own eyes, they replied, " no! but repeatedly by Indians, by negroes, and by whites," and they ſeemed to think it eſtabliſhed beyond a doubt, that theſe beauteous ſcaly *poiſſardes* did actually inhabit the waters of this country.

One of them it was ſaid had been taken alive, by an Indian, who was carrying it to Savonette as a preſent to Mr. Heynemann; but from the prejudices of his nation, whoſe ſuperſtition protects theſe fiſh-tailed ladies; the man was compelled, by others of the Indians, to return her to the river, leſt the enraged mother ſhould haunt them with every ſpecies of ill.

A planter who was preſent, obſerving that the officers were ſtill unconfirmed in their faith, added a ſpecies of teſtimony which he ſeemed to think even the moſt incredulous could not reſiſt. "Nothing," ſaid he, "is more certain than that mermaids do exiſt in the rivers of Guiana, for I know a navy officer who has not only ſeen them alive, but who actually ate of one, which had been cooked and ſerved up for the table." This he conſidered as "confirmation ſtrong"—but as neither this gentleman nor any of the others had ſeen or eaten of theſe fiſh-ladies themſelves, however it might border upon a breach of politeneſs, it was no contradiction of the aſſertions made by them, not to be convinced by the ſame reports, which had confirmed their belief: we therefore aſſume the liberty of Engliſhmen, and ſtill continue ..... to doubt!

LETTER II.

Captain Maxwell and the Author make an excurſion to Mynheer Roboloſki's. Plantation Zuidwyk. Polite attentions of Mynheer Roboloſki. Ceremony of ſiddling old grey, a favorite ſteed. Author makes a promenade round the eſtate. Jealouſy a tormenting paſſion. A Weſt India ſtorm. Afflicting loſs of an officer in yellow fever. Remarks upon military funerals. Example of the effect of theſe ſolemn obſequies. Diſeaſed appearances. Uncertain ſymptoms.

Berbiſche, July 12.

You will be ſurprized to hear of my having already made another river excurſion; but I before mentioned to you that we had intended viſiting the eſtate of Mynheer Roboloſki, on our return from M. Heynemann's:—not being able to effect it then, and afterwards receiving a preſſing renewal of the invitation by ſome friends of M. Roboloſki, who came to paſs a day with the officers at the fort; in company with captain Maxwell, I availed myſelf of the opportunity of returning with theſe gentlemen. We dined on our way, at the plantation Zuidwyk—one of the moſt pleaſant and improved ſpots on the bank of the

river. M. Linde, the gentleman we went to ſee, was indiſpoſed, but he was inſpired with health on ſeeing a party of unexpected viſitors, and he entertained us with all the glad welcome of the colony, moſt cordially inviting us to prolong our viſit.

Zuidwyk is a coffee plantation. It is well cultivated, and rich in fruits.—The houſe is ſpacious, and, ſtanding at a pleaſant diſtance from the river, with the ground ornamented and improved, it not only appears reſpectable, but conveys the idea of importance.

From our delay at Zuidwyk we loſt the favorable moment of tide, and, in conſequence, had to row three miles againſt a ſtrong current, which coſt the poor ſlaves four long hours of very ſevere labour and fatigue.

We were moſt gladly received by M. Robloſki, who, in his attentions towards us, ſeemed anxious to rival all the friendly hoſpitality we had experienced. Every mark of diſtinction and reſpect was conferred upon us, and a liberal ſupply of all the beſt things of the houſe and eſtate was ſerved for our entertainment. When we were at table, ſlaves

were placed at our elbows to wave lime boughs, in order to defend us from the inſects; and, in the evening, we were ſet down to cards with two or three negroes burning lime ſprigs around us, while others were placed with green branches to chaſe away the muſquitoes, as well as to ſerve us with copious libations from an adjoining table, which was ſpread with wine, punch, ſangaree, and other rich liqueurs. At going to bed, and at riſing, ſlaves attended us with water for our feet, and were ſtrictly enjoined to kneel down, and waſh them: nor were we ſuffered to encounter *the fatigue* of ſtooping, nor allowed to wet our hands in ſo humble an office.

It happened that I expreſſed a deſire to make the tour of the eſtate, in order to obſerve its extent and cultivation. The wiſh ſcarcely had utterance before orders were given for the favorite horſe of M. Roboloſki to be brought to the door. I had intended myſelf a pedeſtrian ramble, but was not permitted to engage in ſuch "exceſſive fatigue." Old grey was quickly led out, and appeared before the window; when the proceſs of putting on the beſt ſaddle, "for Mynheer," and arranging the gay trappings became the buſineſs of no leſs than

ſix ſlaves, and occupied them for nearly an hour and half, forming a truly diverting and ludicrous ſcene. The head, the neck, each ſide, and the very tail of the animal had its appropriate negro. The bridle, the crupper, every girth and ſtirrup occupied a ſeparate ſlave, all hurrying in the full buſtle of attentive exertion. At length the ponderous ſaddled was miſerably fixed, and, without attempting to inſtruct the maſter or correct the ſlaves, I mounted upon *the neck* of old grey, and ſoberly trotted round the plantation. At every angle or turning, I met with a freſh ſlave who had been ſtationed there in readineſs to run after my horſe, and to direct and attend me, whitherſoever I might wiſh to bend my way: but as neither old grey, nor myſelf, were inclined to advance with great ſpeed, all my running foot-men were able to keep pace with me, ſo that before I had completed my journey, I had collected quite a hoſt of attendants, and found myſelf moving amidſt a naked and numerous throng.

Together with a natural ſprightlineſs, and vivacity of temper, M. Roboloſki is generous and hoſpitable to an extreme. All that was rare was preſented to us while we remained,

beſides which numberleſs offerings were heaped upon us at our departure, and he would have given us more than we could carry away. The whole produce of his houſe and eſtate—all he had, his *Wowſki* excepted, was at our command. On leaving him he loaded us with fruits, pickles, Tonquin beans, and other good things; and it was with difficulty we prevented him from depriving himſelf of even the comforts of his home for our accommodation. Towards his ſlaves he is extremely rigid, and holds them in very ſtrict ſubjection; but, with the many good qualities he poſſeſſes, it cannot be ſuſpected that cruelty has any ſhare in his government. Unhappily, with the moſt liberal and generous nature, he has an unfortunate diſpoſition that torments him with all the harrowing pangs of a dark and embittering paſſion. Kind and attentive as he is both to his friends and to ſtrangers, he knows neither peace, nor comfort, whilſt they are in the houſe, from his mind being inceſſantly tortured with the dread ſuſpicion that a diſguſting black woman, whom he keeps as his wife, may be ſeized with a fit of inconſtancy, and ſhare with others thoſe joys he expects her to reſerve for him alone. He, therefore, locks her up ſtairs while his viſitors

are with him, and keeps the key of the door in his pocket. To ſuch exceſs, indeed, does he carry his jealouſy, as to employ a young ſlave in the houſe, for the expreſs purpoſe of watching the poor hideous woman's conduct, and reporting to him her every look and action;—an unhappy and fallacious policy, which can have no other effect, but to diſtreſs her, and aggravate his own diſcomfort.

The day after our return from M. Roboloſki's, we witneſſed one of the great and awful ſcenes of a Weſt India climate—one of thoſe convulſions of the weather, which convey the idea of enraged elements warring to reduce all nature again to chaos. It is not eaſy for any one, who is acquainted only with the ſoft breezes and ſhowers of Europe, to conceive the terrific grandeur which is ſometimes exhibited by a ſtorm within the tropics.

The morning of July 5th was ſtill and ſerene—the heat of noon exceſſive—a little before evening the heavens blackened, and the clouds accumulated in dark maſſes threatening a direful ſtorm. Preſently a tearing wind iſſued forth in impetuous current; awful thunder ſuddenly opened in dreadful concuſ-

ſion, like the burſting of a thouſand cannon; piercing lightening cut through the gloomy darkneſs in fiery flaſhes; the troubled ſea ſwelled in roaring billows; and the pouring rain ruſhed down in deſtructive ſtreams. All the horrors of a tropical hurricane were, preſent to our imagination, and increaſed the fearful ſolemnity of the ſcene. At the ſame moment planks and ſpars, and pieces of wreck were ſeen floating into the river, which created the melancholy apprehenſion that ſome veſſel was caſt away, and that the crew were, perhaps at that inſtant, periſhing from the fury of the ſtorm. Unhappily too our fears were further heightened by the recollection that a Daniſh ſhip had ſailed from the river only a few hours before, and that probably the men who had ſo lately been with us, were now becoming the lifeleſs inhabitants of the deep. However deplorable their ſituation, we had no poſſible means either of aſcertaining the fact, or adminiſtering relief; you will therefore imagine the cruel ſuſpenſe and agitation we muſt have ſuffered. As ſoon as the extreme violence of the ſtorm had abated, numerous parties of the ſoldiers ſtripped and ſwam into the river, to collect the too copious offerings brought by the boiſterous waves. They

found the ſurface of the water ſtrewed with empty caſks, barrels of flour and of biſcuit, tubs of herrings, pieces of linen and woollen cloth, parcels of gloves, and various pieces of wreck: nor was it long before it was diſcovered that theſe were verily the produce of the Daniſh veſſel ſo lately in the harbour, and which we grieved to learn had been driven aground, and loſt very near to the mouth of the river. Happily our apprehenſions reſpecting the crew proved to be leſs correct, than with regard to the veſſel—the ſugar and coffee periſhed, but, fortunately, all hands were ſaved.

Another very grand, but awful and afflicting ſcene has occurred to our notice in the funeral obſequies of one of our comrades—an officer of artillery, who had ſuffered an attack of yellow fever, and from expoſing himſelf to fatigue and late hours during his convaleſcence, brought on a relapſe which quickly deprived his country of his ſervices, and us of his ſociety. War-like honors were done to his remains. The funeral was conducted with all the ſplendid and heart-moving ſolemnities of a military proceſſion; which forms one of the moſt awful ceremonies that the

eye or imagination can contemplate; but under the circumſtances of our preſent ſituation it is too ſolemnly impreſſive to be practiſed without the riſk of injury; for I have had occaſion to remark that, in its effects, it threatens ills beyond the wholeſome grief of the moment. The aſſociations ariſing from the doleful ſpectacle operate ſo powerfully upon the minds of thoſe who are timid of diſeaſe, as to endanger ſerious illneſs. The ſlow march, with the arms of war inverted—the ſolemn muſic—the ſable hollow-ſounding drum—and the thrice vollied farewel, added to the common rites of ſepulture, augment the diſtreſsful feelings natural to the occaſion, and beget a ſaddening melancholy which not only ſinks the ſoul with grief, but reduces the body within the pale of diſeaſe; and hence, although it be a grand and honorable obſervance, which may be attended with beneficial effects at certain times, or under certain circumſtances, it would appear to be too awful and diſpiriting to be indiſcriminately exhibited on ſervice, particularly in a climate where the body is highly prediſpoſed to ſickneſs, and the mind held in a ſtate of depreſſion from the ſudden and multiplied ravages of diſeaſe—and where the ſenſe of honor which attaches to the

ceremony is more than counterbalanced by the ſad impreſſion that the perſon who views it may, probably, in the courſe of only a few hours, be himſelf the inconſcious object of ſimilar parade.

Two of the officers who attended the funeral, although as brave men as ever unſheathed a ſword, were thrown into a ſtate of deſpondency which had nearly coſt them their lives. Overwhelmed with grief for the fate of their comrade, and fearfully apprehenſive of diſeaſe, the ſolemnity of the ceremony produced a degree of depreſſion from which they had no power of rallying. All their military ſpirit, and manly firmneſs were ſubdued, and under the weight of inconſolable ſadneſs, they were rapidly ſinking into a ſtate of ſickneſs, from which they felt hopeleſs of recovery. One of them, who with the ſpirit of the lion, poſſeſſes the heart of a lamb, being wholly unable to ſuppreſs the overflowings of his ſorrow, was ſeen day by day to ſhed tears, like an infant. Change of place became neceſſary to their relief. They were accordingly permitted to quit the fort for a time, and happily by diverſity of ſcene, and abſence from the grief-aching ſpot, the dangers which threatened

them were averted, and their uſual health and ſpirits reſtored.

We had an opportunity of examining the body of our loſt officer: and with ſorrow I learn that we may expect to meet with frequent occaſions for extending this ſort of inquiry. The wet ſeaſon is now declining, and we are led to look for much increaſe of ſickneſs during the ſubſequent months.

Not to fatigue you with a minute detail of the appearances, I may briefly obſerve that in the ſtomach they have hitherto been uniform, but in the other viſcera very uncertain and diſſimilar. With reſpect to the ſymptoms of the diſeaſe, we begin to diſcover much inſtability. Either vomiting, low delirium, ſingultus, or coma, with or without yellowneſs of the ſkin, forms the prominent feature—each in its turn ſeeming to give the character of a diſtinct malady—but all terminating, within a few days, under the uſual appearances aſſumed by our great common deſtroyer.

LETTER III.

Medical diſcuſſions promoted by Governor Van Battenburg. Author's diſappointment with reſpect to obtaining information from the local experience of the colonial practitioners. Method of cure eſtabliſhed by the Dutch at variance with that employed by the Engliſh. Author adopts a mode of inquiry reſpecting the identity of the diſeaſe. Finds that the Dutch are treating the remittent—the Engliſh the continued, or yellow fever. The Dutch ſtill wedded to opinion regarding the treatment. Caſe of remittent fever cured by bark. Profeſſional hereſy according to the Dutch code. Remarks concerning a medical life. The term doctor a ready paſſport —like the term brother in maſonry. In the Weſt Indies and on ſervice often advantageous. Exemplified in viſiting a ſhip, a regiment, or a plantation. Reſpected even by the enemy. The employment a duty of humanity. Medical command more abſolute than military. Beſt and happieſt reward of a medical life.

Berbiſche, July.

THE unhappy loſs of our comrade, mentioned to you in my laſt letter, has been productive of much diſcuſſion on the ſubject of yellow fever. The governor is fond of reading medical books, and feels a ſtrong intereſt regarding the diſeaſes of the troops, and the maladies ariſing from the climate. He takes great pleaſure in bringing profeſſional men together,

and in promoting medical converſations. I gladly avail myſelf of the advantages to be derived from this propenſity, and through the means of Mynheer Van Battenburg have frequent opportunities of hearing the remarks and opinions of the moſt eminent practitioners in the colony; but I am ſorry to obſerve that I have been much diſappointed with regard to the practical information I had hoped to obtain, from the local experience of theſe gentlemen. They ſeem to have eſtabliſhed one certain faith—one given routine of practice, from which it were hereſy to commit the ſlighteſt deviation. Emetics and the bark are preſcribed in all caſes of fever; and they inſiſt upon the peculiar efficacy of theſe remedies in that ſpecies or degree commonly called "yellow fever." This doctrine, ſo generally and poſitively aſſerted by the Dutch practitioners, is in direct oppoſition to the experience of the medical officers of our army, who, in this diſeaſe, have conſtantly found emetics injurious, and bark in the early ſtages uſeleſs. I have therefore been at much pains to reconcile the obſervations with fact; and as the opinions reſpecting the treatment were ſo directly at variance, I was anxious to ſatisfy myſelf with regard to the identity of the diſeaſe; therefore

One of the colonial doctors who viſited our late comrade, during his ſhort illneſs, termed his diſeaſe a "pituitous fever;" but ſtill he recommended emetics and bark as the cure. Indeed were theſe remedies as extenſively uſeful, as might be inferred from the opinions of the gentlemen practiſing in this colony, the crowded contents of our medicine cheſts might be conveniently reduced to two ſimple packages of bark and emetic tartar! Perhaps, no medical officer of the army would heſitate to allow that theſe are very uſeful remedies in caſes of remittent fever, but there are few, I ſuſpect, who would hazard their reputation by aſſerting that, in the diſeaſe known by the name of yellow fever, they can be relied upon as the beſt curative means. The fact would ſeem to be that the patients who come under the care of the practitioners of the colony are moſtly creoles, or perſons who have become creoliſed, in whom the diſeaſe uſually aſſumes the remittent type, and who very ſeldom, if ever, have it in the aggravated form which conſtitutes the yellow fever.

While I am upon the ſubject of medicine you will perhaps forgive me if I ſhould extend this letter by offering you a few remarks re-

ſpecting a medical life, which more immediately preſent themſelves to my mind in conſequence of my preſent ſituation, and the nature of my duty. You are not unacquainted with the many inconveniences and afflictions which attach to the practice of the profeſſion, and you will be pleaſed to know that theſe are in ſome meaſure counterbalanced by peculiar and excluſive advantages. Medical men are commonly regarded as perſons of ſocial habits and ſentiments. Often they are viewed as a privileged race, and the term *doctor* ſerves as a general paſſport, enſuring a certain degree of affability, and freedom of intercourſe. Not unfrequently they are indebted to it for friendly civilities, to which they could have no ſort of perſonal claim, and, on account of it, they ſometimes experience a more diſtinguiſhed attention than falls to the lot of others.

A medical man is made to feel himſelf at home in every houſe. He is ſcarcely admitted as a ſtranger, ere he is conſidered as a kind of confidential acquaintance, and received as it were into the boſom of the family. Whereſoever fortune may place him, he is never out of the line of his profeſſion; and it is peculiarly in his power, at all times and in

all ſituations, to contribute to the comfort or relief of his fellow-beings; for almoſt every one on meeting with *the doctor* feels a real, or a fancied ill, and has a malady to diſcloſe, or an opinion to aſk. Like the word *brother* in maſonry, the term *doctor* conveys an idea of univerſal friendſhip and philanthropy. Even as the brotherhood of the trowel, too, ours is a wide and ancient fraternity, and we, like them, ſoon become known to each other. We alſo ſeek thoſe of our own order, and aſſociate in cordial friendſhip wherever we meet. Moreover, if general benevolence and the good of mankind be their object, ſo is it equally ours; and to continue the ſimilitude, perhaps you will ſay that, like theirs, our ſigns and forms are concealed and private. But let us not purſue the parallel, leſt we betray ſecrets, never to be revealed.

In the Weſt Indies, and particularly on ſervice with the army, the medical officers are found to have many advantages. It is uſual for every perſon, upon being thrown into the ſociety of ſtrangers, to grow into familiar acquaintance, by attaching himſelf to ſome individual of the party, who becomes as it were the medium of his introduction; for where

no one takes him by the hand, or pays him particular attention, although every one may behave to him with great civility and politeneſs, ſtill he is too ſlightly dependent upon each to become intimately acquainted with any. In this reſpect the medical men employed with the army in the Weſt Indies are peculiarly happy, for in every ſhip, with every regiment, and almoſt at every plantation, they find a profeſſional brother who in the moſt friendly way attaches himſelf to their comfort, and kindly ſeeks to procure them accommodation. On this head I ſpeak with much ſatisfaction, being able, from perſonal experience, to bear teſtimony to a general ſpirit of amity, and an uniform practice of good offices, on the part of my brethren.

At moſt of the Weſt India plantations ſome member of our fraternity is either reſident upon the eſtate, or is in frequent attendance as the phyſician, ſurgeon, and intimate friend of the houſehold. He is uſually a perſon of influence, and whenever a medical officer of the army viſits the eſtate, *the doctor*, warmly attaching himſelf to his profeſſional brother, quickly makes him acquainted with the family, and procures him all the facilities

of ſocial intercourſe. This I have many times experienced; and, by means of the medical attendant, have not unfrequently been regarded as the *friend* of the houſe, before my comrades had ceaſed to be conſidered as *ſtrangers!* Military titles of themſelves create a ſenſe of awe and reſerve, and although a military man be received with equal attention and politeneſs, he does not meet with the ſame eaſe and frankneſs on the part of the family, nor has he the good fortune to find an individual of his own fraternity, who might take a particular intereſt in making him known.

So likewiſe if a military or naval man be required to viſit a ſhip or a regiment, where he has no acquaintance with any of the officers: although he may be politely received, and meet with all the common civilities due to a ſtranger, yet his claims being equal upon all, and no one ſelecting him as the particular object of his attention, he returns nearly as great a ſtranger as he went. Not ſo the medical man. If he is called on board any of the ſhips of war, although he be an utter ſtranger, he finds a profeſſional brother who hails him as an acquaintance, and kindly attaching him-

ſelf to his ſervice not only ſhews him every perſonal attention, but makes it his object to introduce him to the officers, by whom he is received, not as a common ſtranger, but as their ſurgeon's friend. The ſame if his duty leads him to a regiment: there likewiſe, although entirely unknown, he is cordially received by a branch of the medical fraternity; who, politely devoting himſelf to his comfort, honors him with his attentions, and makes him acquainted with the officers of the meſs, not as a mere ſtranger, but as a perſon in whoſe accommodation he feels a particular intereſt.

Theſe may appear only trifles to you, who daily indulge amidſt the comforts and luxuries of old England, and can hourly command the fertile accommodations of all-prolific London; but they who have known the hard laws of privation will tell you that ſuch-like trifles are often very important on ſervice, particularly to thoſe who are employed on diſtant and foreign ſtations.

Many other privileges might be enumerated as peculiar to medical men, or attaching to their profeſſional occupation, ſome

even amidſt the bloody ſtrife of war; for although balls and bullets have no reſpect for perſons, nor ſhew any diſtinctions in the field, ſtill when the fury of the battle is over, not his friends only, but likewiſe the enemy inclines to protect, rather than to injure the *doctor*, for his is the duty of humanity, and extends alike to all. It belongs not to him to diſcriminate. The *effect* of the battle alone concerns him; he has nothing to do with the cauſe! If a ſuffering object appear it is no queſtion whether he be a friend or a foe: he languiſhes and is therefore entitled to his care; for it is his to ſtop the guſhing ſtreams of life, and to pour a healing balm into the wounds of afflicted humanity, in whatever breaſt ſhe bleed.

In his command a medical man is abſolute, and without control. Indeed nothing can be more arbitrary than medical government. The doctor is even more deſpotic than the mightieſt chief. Paſſive obedience is his firſt law: he dictates in poſitive terms, and exacts the moſt rigid ſubmiſſion. Nor will this ſeem unreaſonable, when it is recollected that the general's command regards only life, while the doctor's concerns both life, and ..... more important health!

Perhaps you will pardon my pen in proceeding one ſtep further, to notice the very higheſt gratification and beſt reward of a medical life:—in compariſon of which all the honors, privileges, and advantages above alluded to, are light as the dying breeze. It may be remarked that the duties of a medical man are arduous and important beyond all other occupations. Conſtant fatigue and anxiety are his lot. The health of others is his care; and he is often entruſted with the lives and happineſs of neareſt and deareſt friends. Unbounded confidence is repoſed in him, and if his anxious exertions are crowned with ſucceſs, he is hailed as ſaviour, father, and friend! His whole time is at the public command. Not a moment is ſecurely his own: daily and hourly is he called upon to witneſs the moſt heart-rending ſcenes of affliction, and it is his peculiar province to be ſought only in the hour of diſtreſs; whence his whole life is ſpent in the houſe of lamentation and of woe. But, happily for the humane and feeling mind, even theſe duties have their reward. On ſervice, if a ſoldier or a ſailor be relieved, gratitude attaches him to his doctor's intereſt, who is ever afterwards ſecure of his aid and protection. He will fight in his defence, and

expoſe himſelf to every danger for his ſafety. But it is in private life, and in the more retired paths of the profeſſion, that the feeling heart meets its genuine return: for to relieve a ſuffering object from diſtreſs—to check the ſad ravages of diſeaſe—to reſtore an affectionate and beloved parent, or a duteous child from the bed of ſickneſs, and thereby to diſpel the cloud of ſorrow, or wipe away the tear of affliction; and then to receive the heartfelt thanks and bleſſings of a grateful family, is a conſolation which none but medical men can know! This it is that reconciles the anxious toils of the profeſſion—that forms the high compenſation of our labours—and the happieſt reward of our cares!

LETTER IV.

Author apprehenſive leſt his unanſwered notes ſhould provoke feelings of repentance in his friend. Military puniſhment of the Dutch for the crime of intoxication. Remarks made very mal à propos by an Engliſh ſoldier. Two Engliſh ſailors, and an electric eel. Form and powers of this fiſh. A party of wild-looking Indians viſit Fort St. Andrew. The Schacomynghy monkey. An example of the effect of ſlavery, and diſtinctions of colour, exhibited by a mulatto woman. Birth-day feaſt at Mr. Blair's. Sand flies. The wet ſeaſon beginning to ſubſide. Frequent rain at night. Temperature. Lightning. Appearance of the moon. A beautiful lunar Iris. Author feels the inconvenience of being ſeparated from his baggage. American ſhoes. The medical officers in Guiana ſtill expect to proceed to St. Domingo. Author's dilemma regarding the letters of friends.

Berbiſche, July 22d.

WITHOUT the opportunity of knowing whether my frequent, and, I fear, too often unintereſting notes have already provoked your repentance, my pen continues to direct to you its offerings: more, however, from the deſire of aſſuring you that I cannot be unfaithful to a promiſe, and from a wiſh of proving that my mind does not detach itſelf from thoſe I eſteem, than from any perſuaſion

that my letters can afford you either ſatisfaction or amuſement.

I have been lately on a viſit to the governor at New Amſterdam, and had there an opportunity of witneſſing the Dutch mode of puniſhing their ſoldiers for drunkenneſs; which is by making them run the gauntlet between two ranks of their comrades, ſo placed as for each to give the offender a ſtripe upon his bare back, every time that he paſſes. The puniſhment was conducted in the following manner: a party of about forty of the ſoldiers, with fixed bayonets, were drawn out upon parade, in open rank, and ſtanding front to front, forming a kind of alley cloſed at each end. Withinſide, between the ranks, were ſtationed the drum-major, and the priſoner, the latter ſtripped of his coat, waiſtcoat, and ſhirt, and with his hands tied before him. On a ſignal being given by beat of drum, its major, dignified with bearing a majeſtic ſtaff in his hand, commenced his parade, in ſlow march, up and down the alley, the priſoner cloſely following behind, who received a ſtripe with a green freſh-gathered twig from each of the ſoldiers, every time that he went and returned. Several drum-boys were placed at

the outſide of the ranks with ſmall bundles of ſticks in order to renew the ſupply, when any one chanced to break. Non-commiſſioned officers were alſo ſtationed at the back of the ranks provided with canes for the purpoſe of transferring any ſtripes to the ſoldiers which they might neglect to give to the priſoner, or to place upon their own ſhoulders any deficiencies which might ariſe from their not exerting a due ſtrength of arm.

In this manner was the man marched and flogged, flogged and marched, up and down, at the heel of the drum-major, until he had received many hundreds of laſhes, and his bruiſed back exhibited one frightfully black ſurface, from his neck down to the waiſtband of his breeches. No blood was ſpilt, nor perhaps was the pain quite ſo acute as it commonly is from our cat o' nine tails; but the ſadly beaten ſkin, ſwoln with blackneſs, was not leſs diſtreſſing to the ſight than a more blood-ſtained wound, and poſſibly even more difficult of cure. Several drums were beat in loud roll during the whole time of the puniſhment, which ſerved to drown the cries of the ſufferer, while it increaſed the military parade of the ſcene.

It was ſomewhat remarkable that, at the very moment of this puniſhment, one of our own ſoldiers came reeling along in drunken gambols, tumbling againſt the very ranks employed to inflict the penalty of his own crime. On ſeeing what they were doing, he ſtammered out in broken accent—"That's right, *camarades*; give it him; lay it on, boys; make him ſmart for it; a drunken *Yaa—well!* cut cloſe; lay it in deep; make him remember it, a drunken Dutch-dog!" He was not aware how ſoon it was likely to be laid much *deeper* on his own back. The captain of his company happened to be preſent, and immediately ordered him into confinement in the guard houſe, preparatory to being led forth, at a more ſober moment, to probably a ſeverer puniſhment, than that which had ſo amuſed him in his cups.

The Governor has a large electric eel, which he has kept for ſeveral years in a tub, made for that purpoſe, placed under a ſmall ſhed near to the houſe. This fiſh poſſeſſes ſtrong electric powers, and often cauſes ſcenes of diverſion among the ſoldiers and ſailors, who are ſtruck with aſtoniſhment at its qualities, and believe it to be in league with ſome

evil ſpirit. Two ſailors wholly unacquainted with the properties of the fiſh, were one day told to fetch an eel, which was lying in the tub in the yard, and give it the cook to dreſs for dinner. It is a ſtrong fiſh of ſeven or eight pounds weight, and gives a ſevere ſhock on being touched, particularly if at all irritated or enraged. The ſailors had no ſooner reached the ſhed, than one of them plunged his hand to the bottom of the tub to ſeize the eel; when he received a blow which benumbed his whole arm; and without knowing what it was, he ſtarted from the tub ſhaking his fingers, and holding his elbow with his other hand, crying out "Damme, Jack, what a thump he fetched me with his tail." His meſſmate laughing at "ſuch a fooliſh notion," next put down his hand to reach out the eel, but receiving a ſimilar ſhock, he ſnapped his fingers likewiſe, and ran off crying out "Damme, he did give you a thump! He's a fighting fellow: he has fetched me a broadſide too!—Damme, let's both have a hawl at him together, Jack, then we ſhall board his d——d ſlippery carcaſe ſpite of his rudder." Accordingly they both plunged their hands into the tub, and ſeized the fiſh, by a full graſp round the body. This

was rougher treatment than he commonly experienced, and he returned it with a moſt violent ſhock, which ſoon cauſed them to quit their hold. For a moment they ſtood aghaſt, then rubbing their arms, holding their elbows, and ſhaking their fingers, they capered about with pain and amazement, ſwearing that their arms were broke, and that it was the devil in the tub in the ſhape of an eel. They now perceived that it was not a ſimple blow of the tail, which they had felt before; nor could they be prevailed upon to try again to take out the fiſh, but ſtole away rubbing their elbows, ſwearing the devil was in the tub, and curſing "the trick about the cook and the eel."

You have, no doubt, ſeen drawings of this fiſh, and have met with preparations of it in the different muſeums and collections of the curious. Its form is not ſo round as that of the common eel. The head is flatter, as is likewiſe the tail, and much broader; the ſides are leſs convex and deeper; the back is wide, and the body tapers down ſomewhat abruptly, terminating at the belly in a thin membrane, forming a kind of fin. I have preſerved the ſkin of one, which I hope to

ſhew you in England at the end of the war. The ſhock they communicate is ſometimes very powerful, and preciſely reſembles that from the electrical machine. I have received it both from contact, and by means of conductors. The fiſh at Governor Van Battenburg's once gave me a ſevere blow from touching it, in the water, with the end of a poliſhed ramrod belonging to one of the ſoldier's firelocks.

We were, yeſterday, viſited at the fort by a party of the wildeſt-looking Indians I have yet ſeen. Sixteen came down the river in one canoe, forming an unuſually fierce and romantic group. The men had their ſkins painted in various odd figures—ſome with red, others with black and red; and ſome had a thin ſmall plate of ſilver, hung by way of ornament from the noſe. A cuſtom alſo prevailed among the women of this party, which we had not before obſerved. They wore in their ears thick pieces of wood, of the ſize and ſhape of a common wine cork, not ſuſpended to the ear, nor hanging by a ring, but thruſt through a large hole, cut in the ſubſtance of the ear itſelf.

This party was leſs cordial with us, than many who had preceded them. They alſo made their viſit ſhorter. We procured from them ſome Indian baſkets, and ſome bows and arrows. I had likewiſe an opportunity of purchaſing a ſmall lion monkey, called *Schacomynghy*, to ſupply the place of a moſt beautiful one which I had brought down the river, from the Indian village near Savonette, and which had lately died.

The Schacomynghy is a very handſome playful little fellow. He is the ſmalleſt of the monkey tribe, being conſiderably leſs than the common ſquirrel of England, and in weight not more than five or ſix ounces. He perches very commodiouſly upon a perſon's fore-finger—or will run up the ſide of a quart bottle and take his ſeat very conveniently at the top, amuſing himſelf with putting down his little hand to taſte the wine or water, or whatever may be contained within. His colour is nearly black, with ſometimes a ſlight mixture of dark grey—the tail is longer than his body. His neck is covered with thick, long, and buſhy hair, like the full mane of the lion, whence the name of *lion monkey*, by which he

is commonly known. His face is oval, approaching to circular, and his features are leſs diſguſting than is common among the monkey tribe; the ears are ſmooth and round, and without hair. He is a very delicate little animal, and extremely ſuſceptible of cold—even in this climate he will creep into the folds of the bedclothes, or withinſide the bed for warmth. His kennel is commonly a cocoa-nut ſhell, his bed a little cotton, put within it, and this he ſeems to enjoy, without feeling it too cloſe or hot.

You would ſcarcely pardon me, were I to omit noting to you a fact which occurred to my obſervation during my viſit at New Amſterdam. In company with ſome of the officers I went to make a morning call at the houſe of one of the moſt reſpectable inhabitants of the town; and while we were ſitting with the lady of the family, a fine black child, about a year old, ſtrayed into the room, and trotting round, looked and ſmiled with innocent playfulneſs at each of the party. Diverted with the naked little *Pickaninny*, I took her upon my knee, and danced her about, and played with her for ſome time; then led her out at

the door, to give her to a young mulatto woman, one of the ſlaves of the houſe, whom I ſaw ſitting in the hall. On offering the child to this copper-ſkinned lady, ſhe darted a repulſive look and turned from me. Not aware of the cauſe of this I lifted up the infant, to place it upon her knee, when ſhe indignantly puſhed the poor babe away. I ſtill repeated the attempt, endeavoring to make her comprehend that I wiſhed to have the child taken from me: but no! ſhe continued to thruſt her away with increaſed indignation. Surpriſed at this conduct, and wholly unable to account for it, I led my little naked female back into the parlour, and mentioning the circumſtance to Madame S ——, begged of her to tell me whether it was the black face of the infant, or my pallid face, that was the object of diſlike to this damſel of *golden bloom*. A monoſyllable conveyed the explanation! Madame S ——, pointing to the child, whiſpered "*noire!*" Is it poſſible? I exclaimed! Can it be credible that this creature who is a ſlave herſelf, and only one remove from the negroes, can have imbibed ſuch proud ideas of diſtinction, as to deſpiſe a fellow-ſlave, and helpleſs infant, merely becauſe ſhe differs a ſingle ſhade from her-

ſelf, in the colour of her ſkin ? " *Il n'y a rien de plus vrai*," replied Madame S ——, who further remarked, that this very mulatto was herſelf a moſt excellent nurſe, and peculiarly fond of children—but, to be worthy of her attentions, it was indiſpenſable that they ſhould be, at leaſt, as fair as herſelf: her ſiſter's children, the offspring of a mulatto woman and a white man, ſhe would nurſe with the utmoſt attention and tenderneſs ! On learning this I again went to the mulatto, and endeavored to prevail upon her, to take from me the good humoured and playful little negreſs. But I found that no perſuaſions could induce her to notice the poor babe, who, all the time, looked up in her face, and ſolicited her attentions with a ſmile of heavenly innocence. Her ſkin was black, and it would demean even a ſlave, but a ſingle degree whiter than herſelf, to treat her as a fellow-being. Such are the diſtinctions of colour ! and ſuch alas ! the miſfortune, which luxury preſumes to impoſe upon a numerous race, for no better reaſon than that, in his infinite wiſdom, it has pleaſed the common parent of all, to place upon his children of Europe, a paler ſkin, than he has given to his children of Africa.

I have again been one of a party acroſs the river, to viſit our princely neighbour Mr. Blair, who in this remote corner of the globe, where others find it difficult to procure the common proviſions of the table, would ſeem to have aſſembled an inexhauſtible ſupply of all the good things of life. It was a birth-day feſtival, and perhaps a more choice and ſumptuous repaſt could not have been found, even in the proud city of London. The dinner table exhibited a happy combination of Engliſh taſte, and Iriſh hoſpitality. It was ſerved in the ſtyle of Europe, and diſplayed a profuſion of the beſt and richeſt viands, without any of the more common diſhes of the country, ſuch as Moſcovy duck, Guinea-fowl, kid, and the like. Amidſt a crowded variety of other covers we had a large green turtle, with a great variety of the beſt European vegetables, and, to crown the feaſt, a complete courſe of ſweets, conſiſting of no leſs than four-and-twenty diſhes. The fruits were endemic, and ſuch as London with all its riches cannot produce. The drinking part of the feaſt was ſuch as I have deſcribed to you before. At no other houſe in the colony are ſuch entertainments given. A circumſtance, which,

together with the paucity of our ordinary ſupply, and indeed the difficulty of procuring any freſh proviſions for our table, makes ſuch a gala-day quite an object of notice. To you, who have daily feaſting before you, it can offer nothing remarkable. You will not be ſurprized when I tell you that the generous donor experiences the honorable reward of luxury, by feeling, in his remoteſt extremities, the pungency of his diſhes.

The Dutch diviſion of the party returned acroſs the river, at an early hour, like orderly citizens. The officers remained all night, but a rational ſobriety tempered the mirth of the evening. I roſe before my comrades, in the morning, intending to bathe in the ſea; but on going upon the fine beach before the houſe, for that purpoſe, my face, and legs, and hands were ſo bitten by myriads of ſand flies, as to deter me from expoſing to them my naked ſurface.

The weather has been tolerably dry ſince the commencement of July, particularly in the day time. In the night we have frequent ſhowers of rain. The breeze is uſually ſteady,

and hitherto we have not found the air perceptibly hotter than in the preceding months of May and June. The Thermometer ſeldom exceeds 84. Almoſt every night, we have mild and beautiful flaſhes of lightning, following each other in quick ſucceſſion without thunder. Here alſo chaſte Cynthia appears clad in peculiarly bright and fair apparel. A few nights ago we had an opportunity of ſeeing a very perfect rainbow, formed from the rays of this tranſcendent queen of night. A pale-looking cloud, jealous of her brightneſs, ſought to obſcure it by interpoſing itſelf directly before her, when, as if to ſhew her powers, ſhe calmly ſeparated her rays, and arched them on the heavens, in all the ſuperior ſplendour of the beautiful Iris.

You have already learned, that on leaving Barbadoes we were hurried away without our baggage, it being ſuppoſed that we ſhould quickly return thither, in order to proceed to St. Domingo. We now begin to feel the inconvenience of this ſeparation, and particularly in the article of ſhoes, which we are obliged to buy from the very wretched ſtores, brought by the Americans. Such execrable ſpe-

cimens I had never ſeen before. An Engliſh duſt-woman would ſcarcely pick them up in the ſtreet. They are commonly mouldy and of very hard, rough, and coarſe leather; the colour of which is a ruſty brown, with red ſhining through it, and withal, they are moſt miſerably, and I may ſay, painfully made. The price of theſe uneaſy coverings for our feet, is as high as three dollars. Were we in the expectation of remaining upon this ſtation, I ſhould beg of you, to ſend me out a package from Rymer: but it is ſtill intimated that the branch of the St. Domingo hoſpital ſtaff, on duty in theſe colonies, may be ſoon removed; and in this uncertainty the continuing to wear rough American ſhoes, will not be the greateſt mortification I ſhall have to ſubmit to, for it delays the hope of ſpeedily hearing from my friends in England. I cannot ſay—write to me here: yet I know not when I may go hence; and if I ſhould be ordered to proceed firſt to Barbadoes, or Martinique, it may be long before I reach Hiſpaniola. Still, amidſt all the uncertainties of my ſituation, my beſt hope of hearing from you at all, ſeems to reſt on your letters being addreſſed to the Head Quarters of the army of St. Domingo. Continue, therefore, to ſend them

thither, and, whenever I may arrive, I ſhall hail the accumulated feaſt that will await me, as the beſt reward of the long and anxious ſuſpenſe to which I am ſo painfully expoſed.

LETTER V.

Author ſuddenly recalled to the colony of Demarara on account of increaſed ſickneſs among the troops. Remarks concerning the voyage. Buſy ſeaſon of duty anticipated by the coloniſts ſupervenes. Soldiers fall ſick at their poſt. Author makes a viſit at the fort, to inquire reſpecting the late increaſe of ſickneſs. Probable cauſe.

La Bourgade, July 30.

AFTER addreſſing my laſt letter to you, I was called from Berbiſche, ſomewhat ſuddenly, in conſequence of a rapid increaſe of ſickneſs among the troops in the colony of Demarara.

Conſiſtent with my uſual ſufferings at ſea, I was extremely ſick and ill on the paſſage, and was detained on the water, by untoward circumſtances, twice as long as the diſtance might have required. The neceſſity for my immediate attendance here, leaving me no choice with regard to my mode of travelling, I embarked on board the firſt veſſel that ſailed, and which proved to be nearly allied to the memorable Voltigeur. But, although I was

very comfortleſs, and ill-accommodated, I was not expoſed to the multiplied evils of my former voyage; and fortunately, although the paſſage was tedious, I had to ſupport the preſent difficulties only for a ſingle night. We had no cabin, nor had I any means of being ſheltered from the heavy rain which fell in the evening, but by forcing myſelf into a partial opening at the hatchway, and thruſting my perſon between ſome bags of cotton, and the boards of the deck above, lying extended at full length and flat upon my back. This I tried; but ſuffocation threatened me, and I was ſoon taught, that the heavieſt waſhing from the rain, was leſs perilous than ſuch protection.

I was put ſafe on ſhore the ſecond day, at one of the landing places at Stabroek, which are here called *Sterlings*. They are long wooden platforms, which are built on pillars of timber, and extend to a conſiderable diſtance into the river, forming very convenient places for deſcending into the boats, and landing from them.

Having mentioned the cauſe of my return to this colony; you will expect that the

predictions of the inhabitants of theſe ſettlements are about to be verified; I may therefore obſerve to you, that the buſy ſeaſon of duty which they led me to anticipate, has ſtolen upon me, "like a thief in the night." The number of ſick, and the malignity of the diſeaſe have rapidly increaſed, and it ſeems probable that very few, if any of the troops will wholly eſcape its viſitation. Of the garriſon, from ten to fifteen have been received into the hoſpital, in fever, within the twenty-four hours, for ſeveral days in ſucceſſion; and we have remarked that great numbers have been ſeized while employed on duty as ſentinels.

I have viſited the fort, and examined very minutely into the habits of the ſoldiers, and the general œconomy of the garriſon, in order to aſcertain whether any cauſe exiſted there, to which this rapid increaſe of ſickneſs could be attributed: but I met with nothing that could explain it, for although the men have lately received a payment of clearance money, it by no means appears, that the uſe of ſpirituous liquors has increaſed to any degree that could excite a ſuſpicion of this being the cauſe of the multiplied ſickneſs which prevails. It

is, probably, the mere effect of the ſeaſon, reſulting from the increaſed heat of the days, the damp chilline ſs of the evenings, and the offenſive miaſmata exhaled from half-expoſed mud.

The quantity of rain that now falls is not ſufficient to cover the feculent ſediment of the numerous ditches, nor to prevent their unwholeſome vapours from riſing into the atmoſphere; and the partial ſhowers which occur during the evening and night, by ſoftening the half-dried ſurface, favor the exhalation, while they produce a chilling dampneſs, which perhaps contributes to render the body more than uſually ſuſceptible of impreſſion.

The evenings are now ſo much colder, to our feelings, than we had found them during the preceding months, that we have lately been able to ſit with the room-door ſhut, and have even thought that a blanket, during the night, might have been ſupportable. Yet the thermometer indicates no conſiderable diminution of heat in the evening, and but very ſlight augmentation at noon. It is therefore probable, that the increaſed ſuſceptibility of the ſyſtem, proceeds from ſome change in the ſtate

of the body, not excluſively depending upon the mere effect of heat and cold. But you will not forgive me if I here engage in hypothetical diſquiſitions. I will therefore content myſelf with having related to you the facts, and without offering doubtful inferences, leave you to form your own concluſions.

LETTER VI.

Author called from La Bourgade to Mahaica, on account of the prevailing ſickneſs among the troops. Medical officers not exempt from diſeaſe. Loſs of two of the Author's aſſiſtants. Twofold duty of the detachment of the hoſpital ſtaff. Author unaſſiſted at the moment of the heavieſt preſſure of diſeaſe. Endures exceſſive fatigue and exhauſtion. Friendly alarm of the officers regarding him. Remarks upon a phyſician's duty. Situation of Mahaica. The barracks converted into an hoſpital. Plantation "Lancaſter." 99th regiment ſtationed at Mahaica. Salt meat and plantains the daily food. Author joins the meſs of the 99th regiment.

Mahaica, Auguſt 7.

AGAIN my reſidence is changed, and I have to addreſs you from a new home. The ſame unhappy cauſe which removed me from Berbiſche to La Bourgade, called me thence to an important poſt occupied by a ſtrong diviſion of our troops at Mahaica. Diſeaſe has ſpread his ſickening wings over the whole extent of this coaſt, and threatens every European with the perils of his ordeal.

Unhappily no exemption is granted in favor of the medical attendants, and at a period when we are moſt required to relieve the ſickneſs of others, we are moſt liable to it ourſelves. On my arrival at Mahaica, I had the misfortune to find the medical aſſiſtant whom I had ordered upon this ſtation, lying in an advanced ſtage of yellow fever, and rapidly ſinking into the grave, which has ſince ſwallowed his remains. Accounts have alſo reached me of the death of another of our profeſſional comrades, whom I left only a few days ago on duty, and in good health, at the hoſpital at La Bourgade. Theſe are afflicting deductions from our thin eſtabliſhment, and the more painfully felt from the urgent calls of the moment being multiplied, by the ſad inconvenience of ſome of the regiments not having with them either of their medical officers; which throws the whole of the regimental, as well as the hoſpital duty, upon the few gentlemen of the St. Domingo ſtaff, who were detached to theſe colonies, and whoſe ſituation at this critical juncture is haraſſing and diſtreſsful to the higheſt degree. From the heavy preſſure of ſickneſs, and the neceſſarily remote diſtribution of our very limited diviſion, it is only with extreme

toil and exertion that we are at all able to do juſtice to the poor ſuffering objects who claim our attention. Yet, with an increaſing demand for our ſervices, we have the ſevere misfortune to ſee our numbers and our means diminiſh.

My own beſt efforts ſhall not be wanting, but I am well aware that there are many comforts I could wiſh for the ſick, which from the circumſtances of our ſituation it will be wholly impoſſible to procure for them. At this poſt I have the charge of a crowded hoſt of patients, all inconveniently placed, and have neither a mate nor an apothecary, nor any other medical man to aſſiſt me: I am therefore expoſed to inceſſant and almoſt inſupportable fatigue. My whole time is ſpent amidſt the ſick, or in procuring for them ſome accommodation; they occupy all my hours, and all my care.

Unfortunately too my quarters are nearly a mile from the hoſpital, and I have that diſtance to walk four times every day, which, alone, is conſidered by the inhabitants as an immenſe labour, and enough to deſtroy the ſtrongeſt frame. At ſix o'clock, I make my

morning viſit, when ſeveral hours are fully employed, with my head bent almoſt to the ground, in examining, and liſtening to nearly a hundred patients, all lying upon paillaſſes ſpread on the floor; and many of them ſcarcely able to hear, or reply to my queſtions. After this I have to inſtruct an orderly ſoldier to compound my preſcriptions, and to ſee him adminiſter the medicines. Next I have to preſcribe the proviſions, and the mode of preparing them for the convaleſcents, which is here no leſs a duty than to preſcribe medicine for the ſick; and further, from having no purveyor, it falls to my lot, in ſome degree to ſuperintend even the cooking—otherwiſe, as only ſalt-meat is iſſued, our meſſes would ſcarcely be made eatable—certainly not palatable, nor fit for the ſtomachs of men only recovering from diſeaſe. But from great care, and attention, in having the meat ſteeped the over-night, then well ſcalded, and afterwards ſtewed in freſh water, with rice, yams, ſweet potatoes, peaſe, or broken pieces of bread, we form various changes of nutritive, and not diſagreeable pottage.

Having gone through the whole of theſe ceremonies, which you will believe conſume

a full proportion of the forenoon, I have to walk back to the barracks, where, on my arrival, I am not unfrequently ſo exhauſted as to be obliged to throw myſelf at full length upon my mattreſs, and lie for a conſiderable time before I can recover ſufficient ſtrength either to bathe my perſon, or take my food.

In the evening I return again to the hoſpital, and repeat my viſit to the ſick as in the morning. Whenever I can command an interval it is occupied in writing, for in addition to my other engagements, I have to make out the neceſſary returns for the commanding officer, and for head-quarters, and to keep full and correct ſtatements of all accompts, receipts, and hoſpital diſburſements.

Amidſt my buſy round I often hear it loudly whiſpered that the fatigue to which I am ſubjected muſt ſoon deſtroy me, and many of the officers and planters are kind enough to expreſs friendly apprehenſions regarding my ſafety: but in this hour of need no perſonal conſiderations can induce me to relax in my duty. More than my utmoſt efforts are required to procure only ſcanty comforts for the ſick, and, under ſuch circumſtances, I

can neither enjoy reſt, nor ſhun fatigue. Not only an imperious ſenſe of duty, but humanity alſo calls upon me to contribute every aid in my power, and I cannot but feel that to limit my exertions, or diminiſh my efforts would be unjuſt, if not even criminal, towards the unfortunate objects of my care. I cannot therefore ſhrink from the taſk, whilſt I have health and ſtrength to ſupport it. With reſpect to diſeaſe I feel not the ſlighteſt perſonal anxiety, and even if I did, I ſhould deem it neceſſary, ſituated as I now am, to ſubdue my terrors. A military officer does not ſhrink from a cannon, although he ſees it pointed towards him!—and ſhall a medical officer turn from diſeaſe, which it is his duty to meet, and to combat! I have been always of opinion that the phyſician who deſerts his poſt in the hour of ſickneſs is no leſs a coward than the officer who abandons his garriſon at a period of danger; or the ſoldier who turns his back upon an enemy in the field of battle: therefore, however anxious the kindneſs of my friends and comrades may render them, concerning my ſafety, I cannot prevail upon myſelf to leſſen my exertions.

From its ſituation Mahaica might ſeem to be one of the moſt healthy poſts in Guiana. It is open to the ſea, and freely expoſed to the cool breeze. We have no town, nor village near us. The name is given to a certain diſtrict about the mouth of (what is here termed a creek, but what is in fact) a conſiderable river, called by the Indians Mahaica. The fort, in point of ſtrength, offers nothing formidable, but its ſituation is well choſen as a military poſt, being on the coaſt between the two rivers Demarara and Berbiſche, about twenty miles from the former, and fifty from the latter; and immediately upon the border of the ſea, commanding at once the entrance of the river Mahaica, and of a ſmaller creek which opens nearly at the ſame ſpot into the ocean. Next to Fort William Frederic and Fort St. Andrew, Mahaica is the moſt important garriſon in the two colonies. The barracks at the fort are not large enough to contain the whole of the troops now ſtationed here, the houſe and other buildings therefore of a neighbouring eſtate, called Lancaſter, are occupied for that purpoſe. Indeed to meet the exigencies of the moment we are compelled to appropriate every room at the fort to the uſe

of the ſick—and all the officers and ſoldiers, who are well, are removed to the plantation Lancaſter, which is nearly a mile from the fort, upon the ſame bank of the river, but on the oppoſite ſide of the creek.

Lancaſter is a large cotton eſtate belonging to the repreſentatives of a Mr. Phillips, who is lately dead. It is now under the direction of a manager, ſubject to the eye and control of an attorney; the former reſiding on the ſpot, the latter at a plantation in the vicinity.

This eſtate is traverſed in various parts by double rows of trees, forming a pleaſant ſhade between them, and bearing a fruit, reſembling in flavour the Turkey fig, hence called fig-trees. They are rather larger than the orange trees, and their foliage is thick and green. The fruit is about the ſize of the coffee berry: it is filled with ſmall ſeeds, and in ſubſtance is like the fig.

The 99th regiment is, at preſent, on this ſtation, and in point of quarters is very conveniently accommodated, the officers living in the houſe, and the ſoldiers in a large cotton

logie, which forms a ſpacious and well ventilated barrack.

Reſpecting proviſions, we are leſs happy than regarding our quarters. Salt meat and the vegetables of the country conſtitute our almoſt unvaried fare. Occaſionally we procure a Moſcovy duck, a chicken, a young kid, or a ſucking pig, and then it is high-feaſt. Our ſtanding diſhes are peaſe ſoup, and ſalt pork. The plantain alſo furniſhes a ſteady ſupply. We now eat this with creole appetite, and although we, at firſt, diſliked it, we begin to eſteem it as one of the moſt pleaſant and uſeful articles of food, which the country affords: roaſted, it ſerves as bread—boiled, it is uſed as a table-vegetable—ſtewed, or fried, it is eaten as fruit, and pounded in a mortar, it makes into excellent pudding. The yam is alſo a ſubſtantial friend to us—as are likewiſe the eddoes and caſſada. The potatoes of the country are ſweet and ſatiating, and not much eſteemed. We occaſionally obtain a few which have been brought from Europe in the trading ſhips: and theſe we enjoy as a great treat. The officers have kindly received me into the regimental meſs, which, by offering me the common ſupply of their table,

happily relieves me from all the trouble and concern of seeking provisions; and at this moment of hurry and fatigue, is an important accommodation to me.

LETTER VII.

Barbarous murder of a ſlave. Cruelty practiſed towards his wife. Situation of this injured woman after her puniſhment. Conduct of the gang at the funeral of their murdered brother. Alarm of the manager. He ſeeks protection from the officers. Obſervations of the attorney of the eſtate regarding the crime. His boaſt that in defiance of the laws a ſlave may be puniſhed to any extent. Proceſs of picking the maggots from the poor woman's ſores. Information communicated by the ſurgeon of the eſtate. The plantation Lancaſter notorious for cruel treatment of the ſlaves. Remarks concerning ſlavery.

Mahaica, Auguſt.

WERE I to proceed only upon the knowledge I have of your feelings, I ſhould not forgive myſelf in laying before you a hiſtory even more direful and afflicting than any ariſing from the ravages of the much-dreaded deſtroyer of this climate; but when I recollect that it was emphatically your requeſt that I would relate to you every fact which ſhould occur to my obſervation, reſpecting the ſlaves, I cannot refrain from telling you, that ſince my arrival at Mahaica, one of the moſt ſhocking inſtances of cruelty has occurred, which was ever perpetrated even in a land of bondage.

Two unhappy negroes, a man and a woman, having been driven by cruel treatment to abſcond from the plantation Lancaſter, were taken a few days ſince, and brought back to the eſtate, when the manager, whoſe inhuman ſeverity had cauſed them to fly from his tyrannic government, dealt out to them his avenging deſpotiſm with more than ſavage brutality. Taking with him two of the ſtrongeſt drivers, armed with the heavieſt whips, he led out theſe trembling and wretched Africans, early in the morning, to a remote part of the eſtate, too diſtant for the officers to hear their cries; and, there, tying down firſt the man, he ſtood by, and made the drivers flog him with many hundred laſhes, until, on releaſing him from the ground, it was diſcovered that he was nearly exhauſted: and in this ſtate the inhuman monſter ſtruck him on the head, with the butt end of a large whip, and felled him again to the earth; when the poor negro, eſcaping at once from his ſlavery and his ſufferings, expired at the murderer's feet. But not ſatiated with blood, this ſavage tyrant next tied down the naked woman, on the ſpot by the dead body of her huſband, and with the whips, already deep in gore, compelled the drivers to inflict a puniſhment of ſeveral

hundred laſhes, which had nearly releaſed her alſo from a life of toil and torture.

Hearing of theſe acts of cruelty, on my return from the hoſpital, and ſcarcely believing it poſſible that they could have been committed, I went immediately to the ſick-houſe to ſatisfy myſelf by ocular teſtimony: when, alas! I diſcovered that all I had heard was too fatally true; for, ſhocking to relate, I found the wretched and almoſt murdered woman lying ſtark-naked on her belly, upon the dirty boards, without any covering to the horrid wounds which had been cut by the whips, and with the ſtill warm and bloody corpſe of the man extended at her ſide, upon the neck of which was an iron collar, and a long heavy chain, which the now murdered negro had been made to wear from the time of his return to the eſtate. The fleſh of the woman was ſo torn, as to exhibit one extenſive ſore, from the loins almoſt down to her hams; nor had humanity adminiſtered even a drop of oil to ſoften her wounds: the only relief ſhe knew, was that of extending her feeble arm in order to beat off the tormenting flies, with a ſmall green bough, which had been put into her hand for

that purpoſe by the ſympathizing kindneſs of a fellow-ſlave. A more ſhocking and diſtreſsful ſpectacle can ſcarcely be conceived. The dead man, and the almoſt expiring woman had been brought home, from the place of puniſhment, and thrown into the negro hoſpital, amidſt the crowd of ſick, with cruel unconcern. Lying on the oppoſite ſide of the corpſe was a fellow-ſufferer, in a ſimilar condition to the poor woman. His buttocks, thighs, and part of his back, had been flogged into one large ſore, which was ſtill raw, although he had been puniſhed a fortnight before.

The following day we witneſſed the preparations for the funeral of their murdered brother, by his fellow ſlaves. It was conducted in their uſual manner, not with the afflicting ſolemnity of the Chriſtian rites, but with all the mirthful ceremonies of African burial, forming a ſcene of gaiety, which conſiſted of muſic, dancing, ſinging, and loud noiſe. They all ſeemed to rejoice more in his eſcape from pain and miſery, than they ſorrowed for his loſs.

The body being put into the coffin, and every thing made ready for proceeding to the

grave, the corpſe was taken out of the ſick-houſe into the yard, and there placed very carefully upon the heads of two robuſt negroes, who carried it as far as the houſe, and then halting under the window of the manager's room, they ſet the coffin upon the ground, and the whole gang of ſlaves danced and ſang, and played their muſic round it, in loud gambols, for nearly two hours; beating at intervals, with great violence, againſt the door and window-ſhutters, and threatening vengeance upon the murderer of their companion. The manager expecting that they would break into the houſe to maſſacre him, and feeling, no doubt, that he merited death from their hands, was ſeized with ſad alarm, and breaking from his hiding place, ran abruptly into the meſs-room, imploring the protection of the officers, and looking a ghaſtly figure of terror. I could not but remark the effect of his ſudden appearance among us. Not an officer of the whole meſs ſeparated his lips in reply to him. The general feeling ſeemed to ſay—a wretch ſo cruel can deſerve no compaſſion. After a ſhort ſuſpenſe, the ſilence, which muſt have been more ſevere than the bittereſt words, was broken by one of the gentlemen, referring him to his feelings,

and demanding whether he conceived himſelf to merit either pity or protection. His fears had magnified the danger, for although the ſlaves were clamorous, we did not obſerve among them any marks of violence which evinced a diſpoſition forcibly to break into the houſe. They at length concluded their dance, then replacing the coffin upon the heads of the two negroes, and obſerving much ceremony with regard to the poſition of the corpſe, they proceeded towards the place of interment. On leaving the court yard, they uſed the precaution of going round the houſe, in order to avoid carrying the body acroſs the manager's window—not, as you will ſuppoſe, from any ſenſe of delicacy towards him, but from ſome ſuperſtition regarding the ſpirit of the dead ſlave. As they moved on, two women tapped gently at the ſides of the coffin, as if to appeaſe the corpſe, or ſoften its wrath while paſſing the murderer's abode. The manager felt highly relieved by their departure; but they had not gone far before the whole party ſuddenly faced about, and came running back to the houſe, the two negroes who were carrying the corpſe turning round and round with it upon their heads a number of times in the yard, while many of the gang

beat and kicked againſt the door, and the window-ſhutters of the manager's room, ſhouting and crying aloud for vengeance: upon which one of the book-keepers, an old man who had been long upon the eſtate, went out and joined in the crowd, and exerting his influence to appeaſe them, again led them away, when they went dancing, ſinging, and beating their muſic to the place of burial. After a ſhort time the gang returned again into the court yard, having left their companion to ſeek peace in the grave. The buſy dance was now reſumed, and they hooted and hiſſed at the manager, and beat loudly at his door and window, continuing their ſhoutings and clamour until dark, when they all retired quietly to their huts.

A few days after the funeral the attorney of the eſtate happened to call at Lancaſter to viſit the officers, and the converſation naturally turning upon the late cruelty of the manager, and the conſequent injury derived to the proprietor, we aſked him what puniſhment the laws of the colony had provided for ſuch horrid and barbarous crimes; expreſſing our hope that the manager would ſuffer the diſgrace he ſo juſtly merited; when,

to our great ſurpriſe, the attorney ſmiled and treated our remarks only as the dreams of men unpractiſed in the ways of ſlavery. He ſpake of the murder with as little feeling as the manager had perpetrated it, and ſeemed to be amuſed at our viſionary ideas, of *puniſhing a white man* for his cruel treatment of ſlaves. To the queſtion whether the manager would not be diſmiſſed from the eſtate, he replied "*certainly not*"—adding that "*if the negro had been treated as he deſerved he would have been flogged to death long before.*" Such was the amount of his ſympathy and concern! The laws of the colony he ſaid were intended to prevent any perſon from puniſhing a ſlave with more than thirty-nine laſhes, for the ſame offence; but by incurring only a ſmall fine, he could, at any time, puniſh a negro with as many hundred laſhes as he might wiſh, "although the governor and the fiſcal" were ſtanding at his elbow.

You will believe that I was careful to obſerve the progreſs of the frightful wounds inflicted upon the poor woman, and to watch her recovery; and you will be ſhocked to know that her ſufferings were ſeverely increaſed, by the cruel neglect which ſucceeded

to her puniſhment. One morning, upon hearing the loud cries of a female, I was led to look out at my window, when I ſaw ſome negroes carrying this unfortunate woman from the ſick-houſe into the yard, where they laid her down in the dirt, upon the bare ground, amidſt a heavy ſhower of rain, then, kneeling at her ſides, they proceeded to examine minutely into her wounds; and you will ſcarcely hold it credible, when I tell you that they were employed a full half-hour *picking maggots out of her ſores.* The ulcerations had penetrated to a great depth, particularly withinſide the thighs, where the laſhes of the whips had cut round, and torn the fleſh in a frightful manner. The ulcers were very raw and conſiderably enlarged, by the gnawing of the maggots which had been bred within them. I cannot deſcribe to you the horror I felt at this deplorable ſight. I had often heard of *maggotting* ſheep, but this was the firſt inſtance I had met with of maggotting a human being, and I felt additional diſtreſs in finding the ſubject of it a poor unhappy female, whoſe puniſhment had been already ſevere, and in whom the occaſion for ſuch a beaſtly proceſs might and ought to have been prevented, had the com-

mon dictates of humanity been obſerved. The poor afflicted wretch groaned heavily under her ſufferings, and the operation, which in itſelf was ſeverely painful, was rendered ſo in a ſtill greater degree by the roughneſs of her untutored ſurgeons. During the whole of the time, ſhe was expoſed naked to the rain, and to the eyes of ſlaves, officers, ſoldiers, and all who chanced to paſs that way. It was a ſpectacle, which was equally offenſive to humanity, and to delicacy!

On repreſenting the horrid cruelty of this caſe to the ſurgeon, he remarked to us, that the ſores from puniſhments did not uſually fall under his treatment, but were left to the care of the *negro doctor* who had the charge of the ſick-houſe; and that nothing was more common than to ſee the wounds filled with maggots—"indeed" ſaid he, "it is often our greateſt difficulty, in the practice of ſurgery in theſe climates, to prevent the breeding of inſects in the ſores."

I am ſorry to remark that the Lancaſter plantation has been, for ſome time paſt, diſtinguiſhed on account of the inhuman treatment obſerved towards the ſlaves; and indeed

it might ſeem that cruelty had become a contagious malady upon this eſtate, for we learn, from the moſt reſpectable authority, that a former proprietor was ſo hardened in his ſavage conduct that, frequently, when a poor unfortunate negro was bound down to the earth, and groaning under the ſevere pain of two heavy laſhes, he would ſtrike him a blow upon the head with the but end of his whip, between each of the ſtrokes given by the drivers; and that, carrying his barbarity ſtill further, he would ſometimes order the teeth of the ſlave to be torn out with a pair of iron pincers, and would himſelf ſtand by to ſee the torture inflicted.

I anticipate your ſentiments on reading the hiſtory of theſe inhuman puniſhments. They afford a lamentable example of the horrors and injuſtice of ſlavery, and I cannot but feel that the ſyſtem which gives to an individual the power of lording his worſt paſſions over a fellow being, uncontrolled, admits of no defence. It is a violation of nature, in which humanity is outraged, and our ſpecies degraded!

LETTER VIII.

Troops ſickly. Author the only medical officer who has not ſuffered an attack of fever. The office of prieſt devolves upon the author. Death of Captain Heritage. Encroachment of the ſea at Mahaica. Rumour concerning the ſickneſs of the troops. Author invites the medical practitioners of the colony to his aid. Their mode of treating the diſeaſe. The breeze emphatically termed "the doctor." Remarks of the "negro doctor" of the ſlave hoſpital. High ſeaſon of the "yellow fever." Impoſſibility of preventing the diſeaſe. Difficulty of curing it. Alarm of the troops. Medical officers victims to fatigue. Different type of the diſeaſe at different ſtations. Author's contemplations. He propoſes to try the effect of prophylactic means. Hoſpital diet-table improved by the contributions of the planters.

Mahaica, Auguſt 22.

I AM exceedingly ſorry not to be able to give you improved tidings concerning the health of the troops upon this ſtation. They are ſtill very ſickly, and it is afflicting to know that the number of patients increaſes more rapidly than our means of accommodation. You will breathe me many warm gratulations on learning that I remain quite well, amidſt the general ſickneſs which ſurrounds me; indeed, I am now the only medical officer of

this expedition who has not experienced an attack of fever, and it were too much to ſuppoſe that I am wholly to eſcape its viſitation; for we are told that almoſt every one, on firſt coming from Europe, is ſubjected to a ſeaſoning malady. My beſt hope is that I may not be ſeized at this moment, while my ſervices are ſo eſſential to the relief of others.

In addition to all my other buſy duties I am now called upon to perform the melancholy office of prieſt. From having no clergyman at Mahaica it falls to my lot to go through the painful and afflicting ceremony of reading the funeral ſervice over my loſt comrades. This is a ſevere taſk to me, and I am ſometimes fearful leſt my ſpirits ſhould become too much depreſſed to ſupport me through all the various claims of my preſent calling; but I am well aware, that if I was to yield to the diſtreſsful apprehenſions which I ſee exhibited by thoſe around me, who are not medical men, the ſituation of the ſick muſt be even more dreadful than it is at preſent; I am therefore reſolved, if my ſtrength continues, to meet with firmneſs all the neceſſities of this urgent period.

We have recently loſt a pleaſant and amiable companion in the death of captain Heritage, who fell a victim to his timidity of diſeaſe. He ſuffered ſerious alarm on account of the death of Mr. Ramſden, and we found it wholly impoſſible to rouſe him from the deſponding impreſſion. On the 6th inſtant, he followed poor Ramſden to the grave, and from terror fancied that he perceived a "ſmell of the diſeaſe;" but I remarked, while I was reading the ſervice over the body, that he had placed himſelf at a conſiderable diſtance to windward, holding a handkerchief, the whole of the time, to his mouth and noſe. During the two following days he went about, as uſual, among his comrades, without complaining of being ill, but ſtill expreſſing his fears, and occaſionally ſpeaking of ſlight headache. On the morning of the 9th I was called to viſit him as a patient, when I found him in bed. On the evening of the 10th he died. He had no ſtrongly marked ſymptom of diſeaſe, nor any ſign of great pain or ſuffering; but an experienced eye might diſcover from his general appearance, at the firſt moment of my being called to him, that there was no hope of his recovery.—Extreme languor, with a peculiar change of feature not to be

deſcribed by words, might be ſaid to conſtitute the diſeaſe, while they were correct indications of its dangerous tendency. Soon, every thing he ſwallowed was thrown from the ſtomach without effort—the proſtration of ſtrength became exceſſive—he grew helpleſs —ſunk into a ſtate of liſtleſſneſs—made no complaint:—low delirium ſupervened—he turned yellow, and..... fell to the earth like an autumn leaf.

Amidſt our many troubles we have the fearful proſpect of ſeeing both the fort and hoſpital ſwept away by the ſea, which is encroaching upon the land, at the point of Mahaica, with rapid ſtrides. A few evenings ago a ſpring tide waſhed over the banks, and, forcing its way into the hoſpital, placed all the ſick, who were lying upon the floor, in a ſea bath. We have procured a numerous gang of negroes to ſtrengthen the fortifications, and to bank out the invading forces of Neptune; but I much fear that our feeble reſiſtance cannot long avail us, for every appearance indicates that, very ſoon, the whole of the territory about the fort will be ſwallowed up, by the irreſiſtible cravings of old Ocean.

You will not be ſurpriſed to know that rumour has been buſy on the ſubject of the prevailing ſickneſs, and its fatal tendency: or that the prejudices of the inhabitants have led them to imagine that if it were treated by *the colonial doctors* the diſeaſe might be eaſily ſubdued. In conſequence of ſuch remarks, and in order to ſatisfy my own feelings, by trying every means which it was in my power to obtain, for the relief of the ſick, I have ſolicited the aid of the medical men of the country, both Engliſh and Dutch, and requeſted them to oblige me by attending frequently at the hoſpital, that I might avail myſelf of their talents and experience to the improvement of my own practice, and the conſequent benefit of the afflicted: ſeveral of the gentlemen have, accordingly, been good enough to favor us with occaſional attendance; but I find that here, as at Berbiſche, the diſeaſe is treated in the ſame manner as the common remittent fever of the country, and nearly the whole reliance confided to the bark—that great ſheet-anchor of Weſt India practice. This was preſcribed in ample quantity, and in various forms, but it wholly failed of ſucceſs.

At the time of poor captain Heritage's attack I particularly requeſted the aſſiſtance of one of my colonial brethren; and perceiving that it was entirely out of my own power to relieve him, I begged of Dr. — to uſe his utmoſt endeavors to ſave him, when, without appearing to entertain the ſame apprehenſions of his danger as myſelf, he adviſed a copious uſe of the bark. After viſiting captain H. this gentleman went with me into the hoſpital, where I ſelected four other recent caſes, which ſeemed to me to threaten danger, and requeſted the doctor to take theſe under his care, —to command the reſources of the hoſpital department, and to exert his beſt means of reſtoring them: but he declined the charge of attending them, as his patients, although he conſented to accompany me in my viſits, and to conſult with me regarding them; which afforded me infinite ſatisfaction, as I earneſtly and devoutly hoped to profit by his practice for the benefit of others. The bark was preſcribed for them all, and moſt liberally adminiſtered: but in vain, for not one of them recovered! The doctor was greatly diſappointed and chagrined at the unhappy reſult of theſe caſes, and, declaring that there was a "*ſomething different*" in the fever which prevailed among

the troops, from that which uſually attacked the coloniſts, he wiſhed me better ſucceſs, and withdrew his attendance.

I have the ſatisfaction to hear, that this gentleman ſedulouſly meets all the loud rumours of the neighbourhood by inſiſting that "whether the ſick do or do not recover, no fitter medical treatment can be employed, even by men who have been twenty years in the colony, than that which is now adopted at the military hoſpital."

It were ſcarcely neceſſary to mention that the trade wind is lighter and leſs ſteady, during the decline of the wet ſeaſon, than it becomes in the time of the dry ſeaſon: ſo neceſſary, and ſalutiferous is it eſteemed at all times, and particularly at the preſent period, that on the breeze ſetting in, it is common for the people of the country to exclaim, "here comes the doctor," thus honoring it with an academic title, and hailing it as the beſt medical friend of the colony. If it be not ſo powerful now as it is in the dry ſeaſon, ſtill it may be ſaid to be always free at Mahaica, although it does not prove ſucceſsful in preventing the wide ravages of diſeaſe.

I often hold long converſations with "*Doctor Bob*," the reſident Negro phyſician at the black hoſpital, and ſub-medical attendant of his brother ſlaves, who is very communicative, and furniſhes me with many facts and remarks; and although, as you will ſuppoſe, they are not always of ſterling value, they are occaſionally intereſting and important. A few days ſince, on finding that his ſick-liſt had increaſed in almoſt as great a degree as my own, I aſked Dr. Bob how this happened, when he replied—"*It always ſo, Maſſa, at this time o' year, becauſe him weather change from wet to dry.*" Seeing a negro boy, at the ſame moment, in a high paroxyſm of fever, his caſe became the ſubject of our converſation, in the courſe of which this fable doctor made the following remark—"*Him fever ſhall go, when him water come low;—him always come hot, when him tide high:*"—a fact which we very frequently obſerve at the hoſpital, although, perhaps, not ſo generally or ſo intimately, as to authorize an unqualified opinion, that the febrile acceſſions ſtrictly connect with lunar influence.

The preſent moment may be ſaid to be the high ſeaſon of yellow-fever. It now rages

in its utmoſt violence, and with ſorrow I remark, that great numbers periſh from its malignity. Until the partial rains of the preſent period ſhall have ceaſed, and the dry ſeaſon be well ſet in, it is ſaid that we are to expect a continuance of ſickneſs: nor does it appear to be within the power of man to prevent it. Of the cure, perhaps in many caſes, I might ſpeak in ſimilar terms, for although we can frequently remove the diſeaſe, interrupt its courſe, or leſſen its violence by combating it at an *early ſtage*; ſtill, when the more malignant ſymptoms have once appeared, it ſeldom happens that any medicine can arreſt their progreſs, or afford relief. Bark, mercury, bleeding, bathing, and a variety of other remedies have been amply tried—but tried in vain, for all have proved equally ineffectual.

A painful alarm obtains among the troops; the medical officers are falling victims to their fatigue; and many circumſtances combine to augment the melancholy gloom of this afflicting period. At Mahaica the numbers admitted into the hoſpital form a very large proportion of the garriſon; the ſame is likewiſe the caſe at Stabroek. At Maiconuy

and Awbarry, two ſmaller poſts between Mahaica and Berbiſche, although much of ſickneſs prevails, the diſeaſe aſſumes an intermittent or remittent form, and is leſs fatal—while here, and at Fort W. Frederic, it attacks with all the deſtructive violence of a continued fever.

In my walks to and from the hoſpital, I ſometimes fix myſelf at the ſide of the ſea, or on the border of the river, and there forgetting the ſcene around me, and being huſhed into calm reflection, by the ſoft undulation of the waves, or the gentle gliding of the ſtream, I contemplate, in ſolitude, the awful, and peculiarly critical ſituation in which I am placed! I behold the reſponſibility of an important department preſſing upon me—crowds of ſick lifting up their dying eyes to me for relief—officers watching, in earneſt ſolicitude, my ſlighteſt complainings—ſoldiers looking towards me with anxiety for my ſafety, and all who are near me regarding me with the moſt lively concern—each ſeeming to expreſs himſelf ſenſible how much his health, and even his life, may ſoon depend upon the care and exertions of an individual!

Purſuing theſe reflections I ſometimes fall into a profound reverie, from which I always return with new impreſſions of the magnitude of the taſk allotted me, and with new reſolves to exert my utmoſt efforts in the execution of it; although I feel both humbled and afflicted in knowing that my utmoſt powers can offer only a feeble reſiſtance to the yellow-viſaged deſtroyer, who now wields his autumn ſcythe amongſt us.

I lately obtained the conſent of the commanding officer, and had, in the hope of preventing, or alleviating ills, which it is ſo difficult to remedy, prevailed upon a party of ſoldiers to place themſelves under my direction, in order to try what might be the effect of ſome prophylactic means, either in keeping off the attack of the diſeaſe, or in rendering its ſymptoms milder; but after only a few days obſervance of the plan I adviſed, ſome of the men happening to feel a little uneaſy from the medicine, they all ſwore they would not be *killed, while they were well*, to oblige either the captain or the doctor, and, refuſing to perſevere, completely fruſtrated my endeavours, and prevented me from aſcertaining what might have been the fair reſult of the trial.

Our diet-table at the hoſpital is of late very much improved, in conſequence of the planters, of the neighbouring eſtates, having agreed to take it by turns to ſupply us with freſh proviſions for two days in each week. It is not uſual for Engliſhmen to eſteem plain beef or mutton a luxury—but ſuch we really find it here, and, when we meet with it, we feaſt upon it, and enjoy it as a high and particular treat.

LETTER IX.

Viſit to Major Prauél's. Evening ſcene of a burning foreſt. Remark reſpecting the combuſtion of the woods at night. Viſit to Mynheer Bercheych. Mode of travelling. Figure and addreſs of Mynheer Bercheych. Situation and conſtruction of his dwelling. Account of his late plantation Gorcum. Stock of cattle and poultry. Gin and pipes and ſugar not eſteemed as neceſſaries of life. Water and Madeira wine the only liquids uſed. Males only admitted as viſitors. The females numerous, handſome, and of various races and colours. An uncommonly handſome family of negroes. M. Bercheych kind and humane, though rigid towards his ſlaves: —of formal and dignified manner:—in converſation affable, lively and inſtructive. Neatneſs of his cottage-home. The dairy, and poultry-yard. M. Bercheych aſſociates familiarly with the Indians. Accuracy in ſhooting with the bow and arrow. He preſents the author with ſome ſpecimens of natural hiſtory, and of Indian implements. The viſit highly gratifying. M. Bercheych, attended by two of his coloured nymphs, accompanies the party to the canoe, at the time of their departure. Moonlight return down the river and acroſs the cotton fields to the barracks.

Mahaica, Sept.

A conſiderable proportion of the officers' meſs, from the Lancaſter barracks, have lately been to dine with Major Prauél, a pleaſant in-

habitant of this coaſt, whoſe plantation is only a ſhort diſtance from the fort. The dinner was plentiful, and handſomely ſerved in a large cotton logis, which had been prepared for the purpoſe, and, being ſpacious and cool, was far preferable to the houſe. As we returned in the evening, we witneſſed a very grand and brilliant ſcene from the burning of a part of the foreſt in order to clear an eſtate for cultivation. The trees were conſuming with great rapidity, and from the fire increaſing in brightneſs as the evening cloſed in, it formed a moſt ſplendid and impoſing ſpectacle. The major obſerved to us that this improvement of the picture was not the mere effect of viewing it through the ſurrounding darkneſs, it being a fact very generally known in this country, that when any part of the woods are ſet on fire, they burn with greater rapidity during the night than in the daytime. From the greater ſtrength of the breeze throughout the day this might ſeem improbable; but that fires do burn weaker in ſtrong light is a fact not unknown to the loweſt kitchen maid; who, in ſummer, cloſes the ſhutters (as ſhe ſays) to keep the ſun from putting out the fire. Still it cannot be conceded that it is the particular property of the

ſun to prevent bodies from burning. Perhaps your chemical reading will furniſh you with an explanation of the fact, from the known tendency of light to preſerve oxygen in its gaſeous ſtate, and to prevent the decompoſition of the atmoſpheric air, which is ſo eſſential to combuſtion. The fire appeared very beautiful, and might be ſeen to the diſtance of many miles. It arreſted our attention for a conſiderable time, and we contemplated it as an object of grandeur and novelty.

The officers kindly wiſhing to divert me, in ſome degree, from the diſtreſsful duties of fatigue and anxiety with which I have been lately ſurrounded, and which, they perſuade themſelves, are deſtroying me, have alſo inſiſted upon my accompanying a party of them on a viſit to Mynheer Bercheych, one of the moſt eccentric and remarkable characters upon this coaſt—an old gentleman, who by uncommon induſtry has formed a cotton plantation at the moſt remote point of the colony, where he lives, amidſt negroes and wild Indians, almoſt ſecluded from the world.

We firſt rode the diſtance of ſome miles, acroſs rich plains of cotton, to the houſe of

Mr. Graham, ſituated immediately upon the bank of the river, about midway between the fort and M. Bercheych's. Here we found a party of ſlaves in waiting, with a large handſome canoe ſent by M. Bercheych, for the purpoſe of conveying us the remainder of the journey. The tide ſerving, we made no delay, but taking Mr. Graham into the canoe with us, proceeded forthwith on our route. After an hour and quarter of hard paddling up the river, we turned into a narrow canal, and were pulled a conſiderable diſtance further, by the ſlaves running upon the bank with a rope faſtened to the canoe. This canal leads to the houſe, and ſerves as the boundary of M. Bercheych's eſtate. It is continued from a deep ſavanna at the back of the dwelling, and runs along the border of the plantation to the river, into which it conveys its waters, and prevents the inundation of the eſtate. At one ſpot we were obliged to quit the canoe, while the ſlaves dragged it over land, in order to paſs a bridge and a ſluice which interrupted our paſſage. On the oppoſite ſide of theſe we reſumed our ſeats, and proceeded towards the houſe, which is at the further part of the eſtate. On ſeeing us approach, M. Bercheych walked out to meet us;

and, on coming near to us, he hailed us with a moſt reverential ſalutation. We immediately left the canoe, and walked with him upon the bank of the canal to the houſe.

His perſon and addreſs were ſtrongly impreſſive, being at once graceful and dignified, although ſuch as to convey an idea of the rigid preciſion of a formal old ſquare-toes. Much had been reported to us of the ſituation, and the man, whoſe eccentricity is become proverbial in the colony. Our viſit, therefore, was one of high curioſity, and we did not return without experiencing very ample gratification.

M. Bercheych is a remarkably fine old man. He is robuſt and ſquare-built, of hale countenance and ſturdy form—very erect in his carriage, and poſſeſſing uncommon activity, together with great bodily ſtrength, and vaſt energy of mind. From his figure and the formality of his addreſs, he appears to be ſtern and unbending, but in reality he is affable, jocoſe, and communicative, and has nothing of the cold reſerve of his country about him. He met us dreſſed in coat, waiſtcoat, and breeches of nankeen, all cut in the true an-

tique; a very large and almoſt cardinal hat, of white beaver; ſhoes well ſquared at the extremities, and faſtened with a pair of plain ſmall buckles; a long ſtaff in his hand, and his knuckles ornamented with deep ruffles. As he walked his ſtaff and right hand ruffle made an extenſive ſweep, deſcribing a wide circle; his ſtep was firm and deciſive, the tail of his coat moved with an important ſwing from ſide to ſide, in uniſon with the majeſtic ſway of his body—and his general air was commanding and dignified. On arriving at the houſe, he welcomed all the party individually, going through the ceremony of deliberately taking each by the hand, and bowing to him with the profoundeſt politeneſs and urbanity: ſhewing, at the ſame time, every mark of reſpect and hoſpitality to the whole body. Wine was immediately ſet before us, for our refreſhment after the journey, and we took our ſeats in a cool romantic little cottage, which, in appearance, and in the ſimplicity of its ſtructure, might have vied with the dwelling of a hermit. Its walls were built with the caudices of the leaves of a fine ſpecies of palm called Eta, which in ſubſtance are lighter than cane. Theſe were placed together perpendicularly, and reſembled a

number of well-arranged columns or ſmall pillars, which were divided and ſupported, at intervals, by others of the bamboo, ſomewhat larger; nor were any of them concealed or defaced with paint, paper, or ſtucco, but all were expoſed in the naked ſimplicity of their orginal form. The partitions dividing the rooms were of ſimilar ſtructure; the floors were of brick; the windows, ſimple openings in the walls; and the furniture of plain wood, unadorned. In point of ſituation too, this native little cóttage might have been a hermit's fit abode; for it is placed at the border of a wild ſavanna, overhung with heavy and impenetrable foreſts, and far removed from the buſy tumult of the world.

The eſtate is at the greateſt depth from the ſea, being the moſt diſtant that has yet been cultivated upon the Mahaica creek, conſequently it is moſt in the foreſt, and neareſt to the wild Indians. Deep and unexplored woods reach near to the door: before the windows grow cotton buſhes and bananas: a ſmall canal paſſes by the ſide of the cottage: and the only extenſive view is over a wild ſavanna, carrying the eye, even beyond its reach, in unbroken range between the ſavage foreſts.

Here lives a man of refined manners, and a moſt active mind, cultivated by education, and improved by having lived in poliſhed and faſhionable ſociety. M. Bercheych is one of the oldeſt inhabitants of the colony of Demarara, having reſided in this ſettlement when it conſiſted of only two plantations; but ſince that period he has paſſed fifteen years in Holland, where he lived in conſiderable ſplendour, ſpent his time amidſt the beſt ſociety, and entered into all the gaiety and diſſipation of the Hague. After his return to this coaſt, he occupied himſelf in cultivating a large eſtate called Gorcum, and, perſonally, engaged in all the toil and fatigue of a planter. At this time his great amuſement, and the chief relaxation from his labours, conſiſted in domeſticating fiſhes, and the wild birds of the foreſt, in which he ſucceeded to the aſtoniſhment of all who viſited his home.

By whiſtling when he fed them, he trained the fiſhes not barely to riſe to the ſurface of the water at his call, but even to leap from the pond, and eat out of his hand: and from taking the eggs of the birds and breeding up their young, or taking the young, and breeding them up in the houſe, then

ſuffering them to hop out and in at pleaſure, and to fly to the woods as ſoon as they were able, he taught them to return freely to the houſe for food; in which viſits they were ſometimes accompanied by others, who came to partake of their fare; and thus by conſtant feeding and attention, he, at length, brought many of them to be ſo tame that they would fly in at the window of his room, and ſit upon pegs, fixed up for the purpoſe, to warble a ſong; or, at his time of dinner, they would come in, and perch upon his head or his ſhoulder to partake of his meal.

You will grieve to hear that after he had built the houſe, cultivated the fields, and ornamented the garden—after he had trained the fiſhes into acquaintances, and taught the birds to be his companions—in ſhort, after he had adorned this delightful home, and faſhioned it to his taſte, he was compelled, by hard neceſſity, to diſpoſe of the heart-loved abode which his hands had formed, in order to defray the incumbrances its improvements had created.

Being deprived of his favorite Gorcum, his active mind, ever fertile in reſources,

ſought new employment in the cultivation of the rude ſpot which forms his preſent home, and which is now ſo improved as to yield a fertile produce in cotton. Until very recently he had lived at a different part of the eſtate, where he had built a houſe, and near to it planted a garden, which yielded a plentiful ſupply of choice fruits and vegetables; but from the plantation becoming extenſive, he finds it expedient to eſtabliſh his reſidence at a more central part of it: he has therefore built this romantic little cottage, to ſerve as a temporary home, from whence he may conveniently ſuperintend the erection of a more ſpacious, and more permanent abode, at a ſpot already marked out for that purpoſe.

Of his mode of living the ſhortneſs of our viſit allowed us but little opportunity to judge. If not ſumptuous, it was at leaſt liberal, for his garden and eſtate afford a very ample ſupply of plain and wholeſome proviſions. His flocks and herds were numerous, and his plantation exhibited a more abundant ſtock of cows, ſheep, and poultry than was common at other eſtates. For dinner he gave us both mutton and beef, each very excellent of its kind. The deſert con-

ſiſted of eggs and ſome uncommonly fine figs. Madeira wine was our drink. This and water form the whole liſt of liqueurs at the home of the hoſpitable Bercheych. Neither rum, brandy, Hollands nor any other kind of ſpirit does he ever uſe. Beer is equally unknown at his table. Punch he never drinks, and he remarked that he had therefore no occaſion for ſugar, which is accordingly unknown in his family as an article of conſumption. Not being in the habit of uſing any, he does not buy it, nor is a ſingle grain of it to be found in his houſe. But what will be deemed ſtill more ſtrange, is that, although a Dutchman, he never ſmokes; nor has under his roof either pipes or tobacco.

We were ſerved only by females, of whom M. Bercheych has the fineſt aſſemblage I have yet ſeen among the people of colour. We learned that it was one of the peculiarities of our hoſt not to ſuffer a male to inhabit his houſe. His attendants are all of the feminine gender, and, from their hands, both himſelf and his gueſts receive the offerings of his bounty. His habits are ſocial: but men are only admitted as viſitors. In other reſpects alſo he differs from thoſe lonely

beings to whom, from its retirement and ſimplicity, his neat little cell might have belonged. He is not a ſolitary recluſe, nor does he deny himſelf the enjoyments of life. For the beau ſexe he has ſtrong attachments, and he does not hold it needful to forego the gratification of his paſſions. His cottage is a rich ſeraglio —himſelf the ſultan. A finer collection of half-naked belles it were difficult to meet with. They conſiſt of Indians, negroes, mulattoes, and a finely formed race between the inhabitants of the woods and the blacks. One of the mulattoes, from her dreſs and ornaments, appeared to be the reigning ſultana of the day. The number of females about the cottage was ſixteen or ſeventeen, all well ſelected, and the moſt beautiful of their race. Six or ſeven of them are of an age to acknowledge the kind ſmiles of their lord; the others are growing up, one above another, in ſucceſſion, ſo that each in her turn will probably become the favorite ſlave of their majeſtic ſeignor. A Turkiſh ſultan, ſelecting from his beſt dominions, might not boaſt of finer forms, nor of more obedient and devoted ſlaves than theſe of the ſtately Bercheyth; who has all the advantage of ſeeing the virgins of his haram grow up under his own eye, knowing them

to be his ſole and abſolute property—not merely the ſlaves of his paſſions, but alſo of his caprice and his fortune.

Among the female property of M. Bercheych we ſaw an uncommonly handſome family of negroes, conſiſting of three generations, very ſtrongly reſembling each other in feature, from the grand-daughter of three years old, to the grand-mother upwards of ſixty. They were all of fine form, and in face very unlike the common race of negroes, having neither the thick lip, the large mouth, nor the wide flat noſe. Their features were regular, their noſes prominent, and ſomewhat aquiline, and their teeth and eyes peculiarly fine. The old woman was ſtrong and healthy, of active upright figure, and without any marks of advanced age. The daughter was the cottage-cook, a tall neat-looking woman about thirty years old, whoſe face and perſon were ſtrikingly handſome. Four of the grand-daughters were preſent—all pretty, and in feature the very images of the mother and grand-mother—the eldeſt was about ſixteen years of age, and both in face and form by far the loveliеſt nymph we had ſeen of her colour—ſo beautiful indeed as to

diſpute the palm of the ſeraglio. No doubt the good old grand-mother will have early occaſion to witneſs the further diffuſion of her ſemblance in the fourth generation. The whole family were peculiarly neat and clean in their perſons, and highly reſpectful in their behaviour towards others. Although ſlaves, they were as reſpectable, and obſerved as much of propriety and decorum in their conduct, as the beſt regulated domeſtics of Europe: in fine they did honor to the excellent regulations and diſcipline of their owner; whoſe home, and every thing about it, is exemplary in point of neatneſs and order.

The old gentleman is rigid and imperative towards his ſlaves, but his government is ſo tempered with kindneſs and humanity, that he is obeyed more from eſteem, than from fear or compulſion. In the obſervances of politeneſs Mynheer Bercheych deſcends to the correcteſt minutiæ. From his appearance, his manners, addreſs, and ſtately carriage, he might paſs for an old Engliſh baron. The formal ſyſtem of bowing, he ſupports with the tenacity of a very Dutchman. Not a true-born ſon of all-bowing hat-lifting Leyden itſelf, could be more preciſely polite. He

even requires, and returns a ceremonious ſalutation every time that he is met or paſſed by any of his ſlaves—not one of whom dares to go by him without being uncovered. A negro belonging to another planter attempted to paſs him without offering the neceſſary ſalute, and he immediately gave him a ſtripe with his cane, obſerving that if he did not know good manners he muſt be taught; then turning to us, he ſaid, "gentlemen, if even a ſlave bows to me, I take off my own hat in return, becauſe I would not ſuffer a negro to ſhew more of politeneſs and good manners than myſelf; but if he attempts to paſs me without proper obſervance, I always deem it right to inſtruct him that reſpect is due to the whites."

The afternoon paſſed away very pleaſantly, the converſation being enlivened by the ſprightlineſs and vivacity of our hoſt, who entertained us with a fund of anecdote regarding a variety of ſubjects, ſuch as the negroes and Indians—his own ſituation and purſuits—his talents in ſhooting, as well with the common arrow, and the poiſoned arrow, as with the gun and the piſtol—his induſtry in cultivating new land—his perſeverance in

domeſticating birds and fiſhes—the treatment of his ſlaves—his conduct reſpecting his ſon, and many other ſubjects. We found him a well-bred intelligent man, and were pleaſed to remark, that although he lives in a manner ſecluded from the world, amidſt wild men and ſlaves, and uncultured beings of various croſſes and complexions, giving looſe to his favorite paſſion, and indulging his appetites in all of native freedom, he ſtill preſerves the dignity of a gentleman, and diſplays all the ſuperiority of a well-educated and enlightened mind. From his manners, and his years, he is highly reſpectable, as alſo from his talents, and unwearied induſtry. The firſt impreſſion, ariſing from his figure and addreſs, is that of a ſtern juſtice of the peace, or a rigid country eſquire of the old ſchool: but the reſerve of his exterior is ſoon removed by the eaſe and affability of his converſation. He is particularly well verſed in the hiſtory and policy of theſe ſettlements, and we derived both inſtruction and amuſement from his remarks. Indeed we found him altogether ſo intereſting as to wiſh the hours we paſſed in his ſociety could have been lengthened into days, and were grieved when the moment arrived for taking our departure. For my own part I may aver

that I have ſeldom ſpent a few hours with equal gratification and improvement; or in many reſpects ſo congenial to my wiſhes; for ſo entertaining were his anecdotes, and ſo inſtructive and intelligent his narratives, that I could have lent a willing ear from Sunday morning to Saturday night. At the ſame time ſome parts of his hiſtory cauſed feelings of ſorrow and concern, particularly the pathetic account of his being compelled to abandon his improvements at Gorcum, which had been the cheriſhed offspring of his toil, and the fond ſolace of his cares. Although marks of eccentricity of character certainly betrayed themſelves, and ſome errors of diſcretion might be traced, ſtill we could not but contemplate M. Bercheych as great in misfortune, and philoſophical in retirement.

Nothing could exceed the neatneſs of arrangement which diſplayed itſelf about his little cottage home. Plainneſs and ſimplicity prevailed throughout, but a palace could not be cleaner, nor maintained in greater order. A ſmall dairy, of exquiſite contrivance, was moſt delicately fitted up, and appeared delightfully freſh and cool; a little poultry yard, encloſed with a fancy paling, was a perfect model of

taſte—and every thing around exhibited ſome mark of excellence—ſome teſtimony of having courted the ingenious hand of its induſtrious and eccentric owner.

Around the cottage he has cut a deep wet foſſe, which forms a protecting barrier, and prevents any perſon from approaching his reſidence, but by way of a narrow plank placed acroſs the ditch, directly in front of the dwelling; and ſo extremely rigid is he in his excluſion of male-beings, that not even a negro is allowed to croſs this plank without firſt obtaining his expreſs leave. In the plan of the new houſe which he intends to erect, is an encircling ditch or moat of fourteen or ſixteen feet wide, which he expects will prove complete defence to his retired ſeraglio.

From living ſo much among the Indians M. Bercheych is well acquainted with their manners and cuſtoms, and feels himſelf quite at home amidſt them. He amuſed us by ſhooting with the Indian bow and arrow, and we were ſurpriſed to obſerve with what accuracy he was able to hit his mark. He very kindly preſented me with ſome ſpecimens in natural hiſtory—alſo ſome of the

native productions of Indian manufacture, and very obligingly offered to procure me a model of an Indian houſe, made by ſome of the bucks. This, with ſuch other ſpecimens as I may collect, I ſhall hope, ſome day or other, to have the pleaſure of ſhewing you in England.

Delighted with the cottage, and ſtill more intereſted with the man, we let the evening cloſe in upon our reluctant departure, and had to avail ourſelves of the moon as a guide in our return down the river. We walked ſome diſtance at the ſide of the canal before we came to the canoe; and were accompanied to the place of embarkation by M. Bercheych, followed by two of his fine cottage nymphs, who were directed to attend with ſome wine glaſſes and two bottles of Madeira. One of theſe was to be emptied to the ſucceſs of the new home, on reaching the place, where it was to be erected: the other was to ſupply the parting glaſs on our ſtepping into the canoe. Theſe ceremonies were accordingly obſerved in due form, and after ſeeing us ſafely ſeated and afloat, the friendly Bercheych bade us cordially good night, earneſtly entreating us ſoon to repeat our viſit.

He then bowed to us as profoundly as on our arrival, and placing himſelf between his two tender ſupporters, trod back his path in ſultanic ſtep, to his fond and ſequeſtered retreat.

The tide being again in our favor, the ſlaves paddled us with great ſpeed down the river as far as Mr. Graham's, and there, quitting the canoe, the major and myſelf took our chaiſe, and the other gentlemen their horſes, and we finiſhed this delightful day by a pleaſant moonlight ride acroſs the cotton fields to our barracks.

LETTER X.

Author addreſſes his friend by means of ſome officers returning to England. Laments the uncertainty of his ſituation on account of not being able to receive letters from Europe. Britiſh property expended in the improvement of the captured ſettlements. Tranquillity of the colonies. Occaſional alarm from the approach of ſtrange ſhips. Diſeaſe ſtill prevalent. Unfavorable report which might be made by the officers returning to England. Better proſpects. Author regrets not being able to improve the report, by the preſent occaſion. Deſcription of perſons moſt frequently attacked with fever. Examples of ſudden ſeizure. Caſe of Chapman, a grenadier of the 99th regiment. A more happy ſcene. Another pleaſing event participated by two affectionate ſlaves. The negroes ſaid to be diſobedient in conſequence of Britiſh lenity. Examples.

Mahaica, Sept. 4.

AN opportunity now offers of addreſſing you by a conveyance which holds out every probability of my letter reaching you in ſafety. The 93d and 99th regiments being draughted into the 39th, the officers are about to return to England, and I commit my letter to the care of one of theſe gentlemen, who will be good enough to ſee it delivered. Would I could propoſe any means equally probable of

my receiving tidings from you! But I am ſorry to obſerve, that all our former uncertainties remain. We are ſtill in the ſame ſtate of ſuſpenſe, continuing between the two ſtaffs of the Charibbee iſlands and of St. Domingo, as if belonging to neither—at the ſame time expecting daily to be ordered to Hiſpaniola, yet without any intimation when we are to be relieved. Under theſe circumſtances, I can only ſay as before, continue to addreſs to me at the head quarters of the St. Domingo army: I may then have the hope of ſome day or other meeting all your remembrances.

It is now a whole year ſince I left London, and ten long months have paſſed away ſince my departure from England, during which time I have not heard from any of the friends I left behind. To them I have written in frequent remembrance, but from not hearing in return, I am ſubjected to all the uncertainty and apprehenſion of my letters not having arrived, although I fondly flatter myſelf that ſome of the many I have forwarded muſt have been received.

Of news you will expect but little from this quarter. We hold quiet poſſeſſion of the

colonies which ſurrendered to us, and the cultivation and commerce is proſecuted with as much induſtry as though we were reſting in the boſom of peace. Great numbers of ſlaves have been imported, ſince our arrival, and Britiſh property is employed to extend and improve the ſettlements, with no leſs ardor than might be expected if theſe valuable poſſeſſions were confirmed to England by a definitive treaty, guaranteed by the ſtrongeſt powers in Europe.

Although we are left in tranquillity by the enemy, we have, occaſionally, ſome temporary alarms, from the appearance of ſtrange ſhips of war off the coaſt, but commonly, before the troops have had time to aſſemble at their poſts, our fears are diſpelled by diſcovering the veſſels to be of our own nation.

How ſincerely do I wiſh, that I could report as favorably reſpecting the interruptions cauſed by another of our foes—that worſt and moſt fatal enemy, diſeaſe! But alas! his hoſtility is fearfully active, and allows us no repoſe. Againſt him we are kept every hour upon the alert, or in actual combat; for not content with threats and menaces, he openly

flies to the attack, and ſcarcely leaves us a hope of quarter. Engaged in the ſervice of an inſatiate commander, he proves himſelf the too faithful page of hungry death.

The gentlemen now returning from theſe colonies to England will not have it in their power to give a very pleaſing picture of the country or the climate, for it has happened that the whole of the time they have paſſed here has been divided between the wet ſeaſon and the ſeaſon of ſickneſs. Their account might, therefore, be comprized in few words, by teling their friends, that *Guiana is a country of wet ditches, and muddy roads, inhabited by diſeaſe and death!* But although this would be a true deſcription, it would not be a fair one, for the dry ſeaſon is now ſetting in, and we are aſſured, that bright Hygeia will ſoon chaſe away our maladies, the country become pleaſant—the roads peculiarly good—and the climate genial and ſalubrious. Already indeed we have been without rain for ſeveral days, and the ſteady breeze, increaſed in ſtrength, promiſes, in alliance with powerful Phœbus, to ſubdue the lethal vapours of this unkindly ſeaſon.

I lament exceedingly that it is not in my power to announce to you, by the preſent occaſion, ſome progreſs in the health-improvement which we are led to anticipate: we obſerve that the men are moſt frequently attacked during, or immediately after expoſure to great heat or fatigue. The more robuſt and plethoric—thoſe occupied as cooks, or blackſmiths,—boat parties—men occupied in fiſhing—non-commiſſioned officers—ſentinels—and thoſe who have been employed as ſervants to officers, have been moſt ſubject to the diſeaſe. In particular a boat party, employed to fetch water down the river for the uſe of the hoſpital and the barracks, have been ſo invariably attacked in a kind of ſucceſſion upon that duty, that it has been found neceſſary to procure a crew of negroes for this expreſs purpoſe. It has alſo been deemed requiſite to abandon the comfort derived from the occaſional ſupply of an article of freſh proviſion, in conſequence of the men who were employed to draw the ſeine for fiſh, being found peculiarly ſuſceptible of the fever.

The ſpeed with which the attack ſucceeds the expoſure to great heat and fatigue is no leſs remarkable, in many inſtances, than

the rapidity with which, in theſe or other caſes, the diſeaſe runs on to death. Only yeſterday morning, in returning from the hoſpital to my breakfaſt, I was accoſted, on paſſing the ſoldiers' barrack, and requeſted to viſit the drum-major, whom I found dangerouſly ill with fever; although on my way to the hoſpital, but a ſhort time before, I had ſeen him walking in the cotton field apparently, and to his own belief, as well as any man in the regiment. At the ſame time I was deſired to look at a ſoldier, who was lying at the ſide of the drum-major, and was ſaid to be complaining. This man alſo proved to be in a dangerous ſtate of fever, and on inquiry, I learned that he had been attacked the day before, immediately after hurrying nearly a mile to fetch ſome porter. I likewiſe ſaw two or three others, in the ſame barrack, who had been ſuddenly taken ill on guard, and were now about to increaſe our crowded liſt at the hoſpital.

A few days ago, on my paſſing by the guard-houſe, I obſerved a grenadier, named Chapman, ſitting among the men who were upon guard, ſeemingly unwell; and on my aſking him if he was ſick, he anſwered in a firm ſtrong voice, that he felt "*a little poorly with*

head-ach, but not ill;" ſtill I perceived that he had more of indiſpoſition about him, than he was aware of, and I was the more particularly led to notice any ſymptoms of diſeaſe in this man from his having been repeatedly an object of converſation and remark, in health. He was a hardy robuſt grenadier, and from having been much expoſed on fatigue-duty in Ireland, during the time of the ſickneſs which the troops had experienced at Spike Iſland and at Cove; from having ſupported much of ſimilar duty on the paſſage; and alſo a conſiderable ſhare ſince his arrival in the Weſt Indies, without ſuffering from it, the officers had pointed him out to me, as a perſon who was "ſecure againſt *even yellow-fever, and the doctors.*" He was ſitting in his uſual clothing, talking to the men of the guard, ſenſible only of ſlight head-ach, and laſſitude: but as I ſaw evidently that it was an attack of fever, without mentioning this to him, I hinted that it would be better he ſhould go to the hoſpital, if he was at all unwell, in order that he might have the benefit of medical attendance, and of ſuch remedies as his caſe required. He inſtantly expreſſed great alarm, and ſaid, "*I am not ill: if you take me to the hoſpital, I ſhall catch the fever and die.*"—On my ſtating the impropri-

ety of his remaining among the well men, and not uſing the proper means of recovery, he replied "*I am not ſick, and only want an appetite to be quite well,*" and when I urged him further to go into the hoſpital, he anſwered with quickneſs, "*Indeed I am not bad, and if I was, I would rather ſtab myſelf at once, than go where ſo many are dying every day of yellow fever.*" Poor fellow! he was wholly unconſcious, that the diſeaſe, he ſo much dreaded, was upon him—and as I found that his terror of the hoſpital was quite inſurmountable, I did not augment his alarm, either by inſiſting upon his being carried thither, or by telling him that the fever had already ſeized him; but in order that he might be removed from the guard-room, I gave directions for a hammock to be put up under the piazza of the houſe, where he might be in quiet, and entirely alone. This being done, without delay, I prevailed upon him to go directly, and lie down, and was glad to ſee him ſafe in bed; for, in my converſation with him, I had diſcovered enough to cauſe ſtrong apprehenſions leſt he ſhould die, amidſt the men of the guard, before we could have him removed! Although he felt ſo little of illneſs, and thoſe around him were ſo wholly inſenſible of his peril, there was an indeſcriba-

ble ſomething about him, particularly in his countenance, which beſpake extreme danger; and from which the eye of experience might ſee that he was ſoon to die! After having him placed in the hammock, and preſcribing for him ſuch remedies as were neceſſary, I inſtructed the medical gentlemen, who had lately arrived at this poſt to give me aſſiſtance, to pay particular attention to his caſe, remarking, that from his preſent appearance, I ſhould not be ſurprized if, in the courſe of an hour or two, I ſhould learn that he was dead. The event verified my ſuſpicions: a convulſive tremor of the muſcles quickly ſeized him, and at noon he was a corpſe! Such are the fevers of this climate! Often a man is well in the morning, and at night is no more: nor is it poſſible for any one, who has not ſeen many caſes of the diſeaſe, to judge of the degree of danger which threatens thoſe who are attacked. Chapman had been one of the party employed to drag the fiſhing net in the ſea, and I have been the more minute in relating his caſe, becauſe, in him, the circumſtances I have mentioned were ſtrikingly exemplified. He was a man who poſſeſſed great ſtrength of conſtitution—had been expoſed to the heat of the ſun immediately previous to the at-

tack—and was very rapidly deſtroyed by the diſeaſe.

But you will tell me not to dwell on tales of ſadneſs and diſtreſs; I therefore obey, and haſten to lead you to a ſcene of joy and gladneſs, in which I am ſure your heart will cordially participate: but the powers of deſcription fail me, and I ought to invoke ſuperior aid to aſſiſt my pen in repreſenting what my boſom felt. I had ordered the convaleſcents to be aſſembled, from all the different wards and hoſpitals, and paraded upon the beach, that I might carefully inſpect them, in order to judge what number were fit to be removed to a diſtant poſt for change of air and place; and to give room at the hoſpital for the better accommodation of the ſick—and the pleaſure which I witneſſed upon the countenances of theſe poor men, and which ſwelled at my own heart, on the occaſion, was far greater than words can tell. A very conſiderable body of pale, feeble, and emaciated beings were brought together, and, being drawn up, on the parade, they hailed each other, in cheerful greetings, like men raiſed from the dead. Joy gladdened every eye; the comrade hailed his friend as one returned from the grave; all were happy, and

the delight of again ſeeing each other, ſhone in every face. The meeting was an exhilarating cordial to them. Mirth and livelineſs ſpread around—wit and repartee prevailed, and they addreſſed each other, in quaint jokes, and comic gratulations, deſcriptive of their late dangers, and their preſent eſcape. This effect of bringing them together gave me great pleaſure, and on ſeeing ſo numerous a body ſaved from the very jaws of death, I was no leſs delighted than the happieſt of the party. Their appearance was diſtreſsful, and their pallid ghaſtly viſages, and emaciated figures to men leſs converſant with the more direful examples of diſeaſe, might have conveyed the idea of ſpeedy diſſolution, rather than of approaching health: but to thoſe who had themſelves been in a far worſe ſtate, and who had long been lying, ſurrounded with the ſick and the dying, no appearances could be diſpiriting, while they and their comrades were able to ſupport themſelves upon their legs.

I may likewiſe mention to you another inſtance, which has lately afforded me a high degree of pleaſure. On making my evening viſit one night at the hoſpital, as I approached I heard a loud ſcreaming from one of the patients,

whom I found ſtruggling in violent convulſions, and apparently ſinking into the arms of death. His pulſe was feeble and tremulous, his countenance collapſed, and his extremities cold. More with the view of preventing the other patients from fancying that we could neglect any one, when he ſeemed moſt to require our aid, than from any hope of relieving him, I directed the cold aſperſion, with bliſters, and volatiles to be adminiſtered—fully expecting to find him dead at my next viſit. On my way to the hoſpital the following morning, I overtook two very decent female ſlaves, a black and a mulatto, who were going, they ſaid, to viſit *Joſeph*; and on my learning that Joſeph was the patient I had ſeen ſo ill in the evening, I adviſed them to go back, telling them, that I feared they were too late to ſee him alive. They were extremely affected at the news, but ſtill proceeded to the hoſpital, and not leſs to their ſurprize than mine, found the poor man able to receive them with a ſmile, and to ſpeak to them.

I partook moſt cordially in their joy at ſeeing him ſo much recovered, and had additional pleaſure in obſerving with what delight and ſatisfaction theſe happy ſlaves gave to

their reſuſcitated favorite ſeveral little pledges of tenderneſs, ſuch as a bit of ſugar-cane, two or three green oranges, and other things to moiſten his fevered lips. Joſeph ſtill remains in the hoſpital, and you will feel aſſured that he receives the moſt aſſiduous attention both from myſelf, and the two kind ſlaves, who ſympathize in his ſufferings; and although he is not yet out of danger, we are not without the hope of ſeeing him reſtored to health and his friends.

We are told by the planters, that ſince the arrival of the Engliſh in theſe colonies, the people of colour are grown unuſually diſobedient, and even inſolent; which is attributed to our being more lenient towards them than their Dutch maſters. Whether or not this be admitted as the cauſe, it has happened that two very recent inſtances have occurred in proof of the fact, and which have made it neceſſary to uſe means of correcting their daring preſumption. Conſiſtent with the rules of the fort, the officer on guard is inſtructed to examine every veſſel that paſſes, in order to aſcertain whither ſhe is bound, and with what cargo freighted. Yeſterday a boat going from Mahaica creek reſiſted the orders of the

guard, and, in defiance of the ſentinel, attempted to paſs without bringing to. After hailing her ſeveral times in vain, the ſoldier was directed to fire into her, which being promptly obeyed, the crew became intimidated, and let go the anchor. The maſter was then deſired to come on ſhore to give an account of his veſſel and cargo, and to explain his conduct; when it proved that none but people of colour were on board, and that this inſulting diſobedience of the rules of the fort was their own act. It was therefore deemed neceſſary o make an example of the mulatto commander, in order to ſhew the ſlaves that ſuch diſreſpect would not eſcape with impunity. The crew were accordingly brought on ſhore, and made to witneſs the puniſhment of their commander; who was laid down before them and flogged by one of the negro drivers belonging to the fort.

This morning another veſſel was hailed from the battery, yet ſhe moſt daringly proceeded on her paſſage, in deſpite of the ſentinel and the whole of the guard. Finding that ſhe did not bring to, on being repeatedly hailed, the ſentinel was ordered to fire upon her, which he did three times without the

crew paying any regard to it: on which one of the cannon was fired from the battery. This was likewiſe diſregarded, and their temerity ſtill led them on. Another gun was then fired loaded with grape-ſhot. Still they were heedleſs of the danger, and proceeded in defiance of every attempt to bring them to an anchor. The breeze was ſtrong, and availing themſelves of its fulleſt effect, they were out of reach before a third ſhot could overtake them.

We are informed that a ſyſtem of ſmuggling was carried on to a great extent upon this coaſt, previous to the colonies falling into our poſſeſſion, and that a very conſiderable proportion of the produce found its way to the Engliſh market, notwithſtanding the watchfulneſs of the Dutch colonial government; poſſibly it was from this adventurous traffic that the ſlaves acquired a diſreſpect of orders, rather than from the lenity of the preſent rulers of the colonies.

LETTER XI.

Delayed departure of officers returning to England. The ſurgeon and aſſiſtant detained at Demarara on duty. Deſtination of the author, and the other gentlemen of the St. Domingo ſtaff ſtill uncertain. Diet of ſalt meat and vegetables. Author removes from Mahaica to La Bourgade. The ſeaſon begins to improve—the high malignity of the fever to decline. The diſeaſe takes on an intermittent form. Lingering caſes fatal—not thoſe recently admitted. Irregular type of the fever. A colonial ſurgeon appointed to the South American Rangers. His remarks ſtrengthen an obſervation before ſtated by the author. His inexperience. Some remarks concerning the diſeaſes requiring ſurgical treatment. Zeal and attention of Mr. Blackader. Progreſs of ulcers. Patients ſent to England. Dutch troops ſickly. Nature of the diſeaſe. Caſe of the Dutch chirurgeon major. Medical aſſiſtant drowned at Maiconuy. Demarara gazette. South American Rangers. A white colonial corps.

La Bourgade, Sept. 12.

THE delayed departure of the officers whoſe regiments have been draughted, affords me an opportunity of addreſſing to you ſome additional notes by the ſame conveyance. They have been detained in the expectation that ſome of them might have remained with the 39th regiment, in order to have increaſed its ſtrength in officers, in proportion to its increaſe of privates; but the Commander in Chief not

acceding to this arrangement, they are all ordered to embark without loſs of time for England, and to take with them the ſerjeants and drums; yet on account of the extreme urgency of this ſickly period, and the very limited number of aſſiſtants we have for hoſpital duty, we are allowed to detain the ſurgeon and mate of the 99th regiment, without whom indeed we muſt have been reduced to the greateſt diſtreſs; for the ſurgeon of this regiment has been my beſt ſupport from the time of our arrival, being the only commiſſioned medical officer I have had with me, during the whole of our buſy ſervice in theſe colonies.

Reſpecting the deſtination of the other gentlemen of the hoſpital ſtaff and myſelf, I have nothing new to add. Incertitude is ſtill the order of the day. We remain without receiving either pay or allowances, and ſubſiſt almoſt wholly upon our ſalt rations. Fortunately this is one of the few countries where but little money is required, or I ſhould rather ſay, where if a man had much it might be difficult to ſpend it. Fruit and vegetables are abundant, but the riches of Crœſus could not procure a regular ſupply of freſh animal pro-

viſions for our table. For my own part I am become ſo much a creole, and ſo fond of plantains, that I ſhould experience but little hardſhip were theſe the only food.

You will perceive from this letter, that I have again changed my home: and you will probably conclude that the number of ſick is now greater at La Bourgade than at Mahaica, in which you will be correct. After I had ſeparated the happy group of convaleſcents from the ſick, and removed them to diſtant quarters upon the coaſt, I left the patients then remaining at Mahaica under the care of Mr. Ord, acting ſurgeon to the 39th regiment, and returned to take charge of the hoſpital, at our greater depot at La Bourgade: and it is with infinite ſatisfaction that I feel myſelf able to inform you that the high malignity of the diſeaſe begins to yield to the approach of a more benign ſeaſon. Since my return hither, ſeveral patients have been admitted in whom the fever appears under an intermittent type. Were it poſſible to diveſt myſelf of the regret I feel on account of the poor men's ſufferings, and from our ſick-liſt being by any cauſe increaſed, I might truly ſay that I received theſe caſes with plea-

ſure, hailing them as a pledge that our worſt foe has run his ſpan; for if his pulſe begins to intermit, it may be, in him as in other ſubjects, a ſymptom of approaching diſſolution. But to ſpeak without a metaphor, if the fever ſhould aſſume a *remittent*, or an *intermittent* courſe, we ſhall know how to oppoſe ourſelves to its progreſs, and to prevent it from repeating the devaſtations it has committed in its *continued* form.

But the hoſpital is ſtill ſadly crowded, and from the return made to me of the laſt week, the proportion of caſualties does not ſeem to be yet diminiſhed, although I can perceive that they now ariſe leſs from caſes recently admitted, than from the lingering remains of more violent diſeaſe. At the ſame time I may remark, that it is only from receiving a conſiderable proportion of intermittents at once that we are led to hope the fever is changing to a milder type, for repeated examples occurred, at Mahaica, of different patients being brought to the hoſpital at the ſame period, with the diſeaſe under all the varied forms of *intermittent*, *remittent*, and *continued* fever, yet each of them were occaſionally converted into the moſt malignant

"*yellow* fever," and rapidly terminated in death.

In forming the appointments to the new raiſed corps of South American Rangers, it was deemed an acquiſition to find a medical practitioner of the colony who would accept the ſurgency. The gentleman who received the appointment has lately requeſted me to viſit the ſerjeant-major, and ſeveral other patients, in fever, under his treatment; and he expreſſed great aſtoniſhment when I remarked that he had called me too late to be of any ſervice to them, and acknowledged to me that he had not thought them in ſuch extreme danger, *never having ſeen* the diſeaſe ſo rapid or ſudden before, but having for the moſt part readily cured his patients with the bark. Had he practiſed long in the army, or among perſons recently arrived, theſe caſes would have created no ſurprize; it was evident therefore that his ſick-liſt had been much confined to creoles and negroes, in whom the fever is commonly leſs ſevere; and this fact ſtands in confirmation of a remark I made to you in a former letter—that from their ſituations many of the colonial practitioners can have but little opportunity of ſeeing the diſ-

eaſe in its concentrated form of *yellow fever*. I ſhould remark however that the experience of this gentleman had not been ſuch as to entitle him, in any peculiar degree, either to the recommendation or the appointment with which he was honored. He had been only a ſhort time in the colony, and had not been called into extenſive profeſſional employment.

Amidſt all the afflicting hiſtories of this diſtreſsful malady, I ſhould rejoice exceedingly was it in my power to report to you more favorably of the patients under ſurgical treatment in our hoſpital; but, unhappily, at the moment of our greateſt preſſure and anxiety regarding the fever, we are likewiſe moſt diſtreſſed on account of the patients with ſores and ulcers, who likewiſe feel the ſad effects of climate and of ſeaſon. In ſpeaking upon this ſubject, I ought to add that the attention of Mr. Blackader, the ſurgeon, has been unremitted; and that his abilities are not leſs eminent than his zeal. His patients have been watched with an anxious care, and he has been indefatigable in his endeavours to relieve them; and the more ſo from their ſufferings having been peculiarly noticed, and the frequent ſubject of our converſation. We are willing to hope that the

unhappy difficulties he has met with in his practice may be more the effect of ſeaſon than of climate, and that as the fevers grow milder with finer weather, the wounds and ulcers will alſo aſſume a more healthy diſpoſition.

Whether from a wound, a ſcratch, the bite of a muſquito, or the ſimpleſt excoriation, the progreſs of the ſore has been marked, and the ſame. It, at firſt, ſeems to go on kindly, gradually advancing in a healing ſtate, but before it is quite well, the patient loſes his appetite, feels ſickly, or is attacked with a febrile paroxyſm, and ſinks into a ſtate of relaxation and debility; with the ſkin and muſcles flaccid, the countenance pale, and the whole frame languid, and weak. The ſore partaking of the general change grows black and foul, and ſloughing away becomes wider and deeper than it was at firſt. After a time, the patient recovers his loſt ſtrength, and by the aid of bark, wine, and tonics, the ulcer again aſſumes a healthy aſpect, florid granulations form, and the healing proceſs is renewed. Proceeding now as before it often reaches that ſtate, which creates the daily hope of a new cuticle forming over it to complete the cure: but a febrile exacerbation

again ſeizes the patient, and the whole diſaſtrous round is repeated. The ulcer extends itſelf ſtill wider than before, and the energies of the ſyſtem being further impaired, it is longer ere it throws off its foul ſloughings, to take on a clean and healthy appearance.—Yet this does follow, and the now wide and ragged ſore again begins to heal. The patient likewiſe recovers a degree of ſtrength, but remains conſiderably weakened. The healing of the wound now advances, though ſlowly, and again holds out fair proſpects to the miſerable ſufferer—but, before it has cicatrized with new ſkin, he again relapſes, the ulcer blackens, becomes foul and offenſive, and the parts around are deſtroyed and ſlough away to a frightful extent—the patient ſinking far below his former debility. He now recovers but a ſlight degree of ſtrength; and the ſore only clears itſelf to widen its ravages—the appetite is irrecoverable,—extreme laſſitude prevails—cough, and hectic fever ſupervene—and the miſerable patient lingers out a few wretched weeks, until death kindly offers him relief. Often the event is more rapid; but it not unfrequently happens that the patient is deluded three, four, or more times with the faireſt proſpect of recovery,

then, ſuddenly and without any apparent cauſe, relapſes, growing more and more feeble from each attack, until every energy of the conſtitution is exhauſted.

Having witneſſed with extreme pain the cruel ſufferings of this claſs of our patients, we are particularly happy to avail ourſelves of the preſent return of the officers, to put a party of ſick, from the ſurgical wards, under their protection to England, where they will have the chance of ſpeedy recovery, and of ſoon returning to their duty; and as our hoſpitals will be thus conſiderably relieved, I ſhall be the better enabled to ſpare the ſervices of Mr. Beane, one of our moſt uſeful aſſiſtants, whom I have placed on board to take charge of them upon the paſſage. I ſhould remark that the ſeaſon proves almoſt equally ſickly among the Dutch troops as the Engliſh, although far leſs fatal. Among the Hollanders the fever has been milder, and of a remittent type, giving way to the common treatment uſed in what is termed the bilious remittent fever of the country. The Dutch ſurgeon-major, who has been many years in the colony, is now upon the ſick-liſt, and in him the fever appears as an intermittent. On calling

to viſit him, I found him in a regular paroxyſm of ague, the form which the fever very commonly aſſumes among the creoles, and the negroes.

We have lately had the misfortune to loſe another of our aſſiſtants, but, although his loſs is not the leſs to be lamented, we have not to charge it to the account of diſeaſe. It was the effect of accident. He was ſtationed at Maiconuy, where he was in the habit of frequently bathing in the river, and one evening as he was taking his favorite exercife of ſwimming acroſs to the oppoſite bank, he ſuddenly diſappeared, and was ſeen no more. We do not learn that any one was bathing with him at the time, but thoſe who have ſince been here, from that poſt, inform us that it was generally attributed to an alligator ſeizing him, and ſuddenly dragging him down.

The return of our comrades to England gives me an opportunity of ſending you the firſt copy of a new periodical paper, juſt publiſhed in this colony, called the Demarara Gazette. You will find from the compoſition no leſs than from the printing, and the paper, that

it is quite an original: but as you are a merciful man, I confide in your not diſtreſſing the editors of the London papers, by exhibiting to them, or the Engliſh public, the *ſuperiority* of our South American Gazette.

But what will you ſay of our growing importance when I tell you, that we have not only a newſpaper eſtabliſhed, to afford us all the commercial advantages of a ſpeedy intercourſe and a ſtrong regiment of black rangers raiſed for the defence of the colony, but that we have alſo a colonial corps formed from among the reſpectable part of the inhabitants, for the mutual protection of each other's property, and for the general defence of the ſettlement. I wiſh you could witneſs the groteſque ſcene of this corps going to parade, with many of the gentlemen indulging in the indolence of climate, by having ſlaves to carry their firelocks, belts, cartouch-boxes, and the like. You would be apt to ſuggeſt compariſons between the warlike troops of Auſtria or Ruſſia, and theſe languid ſoldiers of the Weſt Indies. I am occaſionally very much amuſed on meeting a fat robuſt figure feathered out with ſcarlet and blue uniform, and ſtrutting to the parade, with a little negro

boy behind him to ſupport the fatiguing weight of his firelock. A few days ſince I paſſed one of theſe fattened warriors, who went puffing and blowing through the mud, and wiping the heated ſtreams from his brow, as if quite oppreſſed with the heavy maſs of his own perſon; while a ſlim little ſhade of a negro, ſcarcely up to his hip, quietly followed at his heel, bending under the weight of his arms and accoutrements. It was a fine burleſque upon the ſtern hardihood, and the rigid endurance of a military life—yet, when aſſembled, the Demarara corps makes a reſpectable and ſoldier-like appearance, and would no doubt be eſſentially uſeful, were occaſion to call for its ſervices.

LETTER XII.

The Author narrowly eſcapes falling a victim to "yellow fever," conſiders himſelf initiated, and free of the Weſt Indies. Inſidious attack of the diſeaſe. Early ſymptoms. Remedies employed. Symptoms at a later ſtage. Remedies then uſed. Author makes his will. Calmly reconciles himſelf to his ſeeming fate — but perſiſts in employing his profeſſional means. Is viſited by ſome medical practitioners of the colony. Copious exhibition of the Peruvian bark. Delicious refreſhment experienced from wine. Grateful relief from cold-bathing. Exclamation of officers on caſting a laſt look upon the Author. The fifth, the moſt dangerous day of the diſorder. Feelings of horror and diſtreſs on the decline of the fever. Seeming change from death to life. The world appears new and uncommon. Author heſitates whether to return to it. Feels ſome renewal of ſtrength on the 10th day. Convaleſcent appetite. Author apologiſes to his friend for troubling him with ſo much of ſelf. No yellowneſs during the diſeaſe.

Demarara, Sept. 30.

ALAS, my friend! the unwilling expectation is at length fulfilled, and I now lift my pen with a hand trembling and enfeebled, almoſt beyond the power of ſupporting even a feather! The yellow-viſaged monſter, who has committed ſuch devaſtations

amongſt us, avenging the efforts I have oppoſed to his progreſs, has dealt me a blow, which all who witneſſed it, believed to have fallen from the hand of death; and truly, the ſhock had well nigh brought me to the ſtill home from whence there is no return. But let me not treſpaſs upon your friendly ſympathy by dwelling upon the gloomy ſhade of the picture:—let me rather haſten to tell you, that the danger is paſt—that I am a convaleſcent from a ſevere attack of the "yellow" fever, and am looking towards returning health. I may alſo add, further, that from having paſſed the fiery ordeal, I ſhall now deem myſelf quite a *ſeaſoned* creole, and feel that I am entitled to the privileges of Weſt India freedom.

But you will expect the particulars; I therefore proceed to lay before you the hiſtory of my caſe, while all the circumſtances of it are freſh in my recollection, although in truth, I feel them too deeply engraven upon the tablet of my memory ever to be defaced. In peruſing them, you will diſcover that the invaſion of the diſeaſe was not leſs inſidious, than its progreſs has been dangerous. On Saturday the 17th inſt. excepting only the time occupied in my morning and evening

viſits at the hoſpital, I ſat the whole of the day in my room, buſily employed in writing. In the evening I felt an aching ſenſation in the middle of my thighs, which I attributed to ſitting ſo many hours upon a rough wooden chair. At tea time I joined the gentlemen of the hoſpital-meſs, and afterwards invited the ſurgeon to accompany me in a promenade, in the idea of walking away the uneaſy weight which I felt in my limbs; but the exerciſe failing of ſucceſs, I bathed and went early to bed, unſuſpecting the enemy, who lurked in my veins, and nothing doubting but ſleep would prove an effectual remedy. But I was again diſappointed, for inſtead of the uneaſy feelings being removed, a ſevere head-ach and pain of the eyes, with great thirſt and dryneſs of mouth ſupervened, and I paſſed a diſturbed and reſtleſs night. Awakened ſuſpicion now taught me that I was attacked by an enemy much more formidable, than the ſuppoſed wooden ſtool; I therefore took ſome medicine, and remained in bed until noon: yet from having, ſeveral times, experienced ſimilar ſymptoms, and nearly equal in degree, whilſt I was on duty at Mahaica, I was willing to believe that it might be only a falſe alarm. The medicine produced ſome relief.

I ſat up during the afternoon, and in the evening made my viſit, as uſual, to the hoſpital: but feelings of languor and general indiſpoſition were hovering about me, and I returned to my pillow at an early hour, again hoping that the ſoothing deity of repoſe would bring me a cure; but a ſleepleſs and moſt wretched night unveiled the deluſion. All the ſymptoms of diſeaſe were highly aggravated, and every ſenſation aſſured me that I had now to oppoſe, in my own perſon, the inſatiate foe, whoſe ravages upon others I had ſo frequently deplored. No time was to be loſt, and happily I was not diſmayed, but confiding in our reſources, I reſolved to ſtand the aſſault, in firm and decided combat; and to a perſevering reſiſtance, I feel that I am indebted for the bleſſing of again addreſſing you. All the powers of my body ſeemed to have deſerted me, but the faculties of my mind were unimpaired, and I may ſay that this has been the only period of my life, when I have ſo conquered my diſlike to nauſeous doſes as for my ſtomach and my palate to receive them, not only without reluctance, but even as delicious cordials.

All the violence of diſeaſe now ruſhed in

upon me, hurrying on towards rapid deſtruction. The light was intolerable, and the pulſations of the head and eyes were moſt excruciating—conveying a ſenſation as if three or four hooks were faſtened into the globe of each eye, and ſome perſon, ſtanding behind me, was dragging them forcibly from their orbits back into the head, the cerebrum being, at the ſame time, detached from its membranes, and leaping about violently within the cranium. A wearying pain occupied my back and limbs, and in particular the calves of my legs, feeling as if dogs were gnawing down to the bones, while a tormenting reſtleſſneſs poſſeſſed my whole frame, and totally prevented the ſlighteſt approach to eaſe or quiet. The ſkin was burning, and conveyed a pungent ſenſation when touched; the pulſe was quickened but not very full; the tongue was white and parched, with exceſſive thirſt, and conſtant dryneſs of the mouth, lips, and teeth. I know not from which I ſuffered moſt, the excruciating pain, the inſatiable thirſt, or the unappeaſable reſtleſſneſs; for all were equally inſupportable, and either of them might have ſufficed to exhauſt the ſtrongeſt frame. Combining their tortures, they created a degree of irritation amounting almoſt to phrenſy; and

which, but for the means uſed to alleviate it, muſt have deſtroyed me in a few hours. No place, nor poſition afforded a moment's reſt. I rolled about the bed—turned every inſtant from ſide to ſide—placed my head high—laid it low—threw my limbs from under the ſheet, hung them over the ſide of the bed—tumbled off the clothes, and moved about inceſſantly to find a reſting place; but all in vain—no eaſe was to be found, not even a momentary reſpite was granted from this exceſſive torment. It was under theſe ſymptoms that I requeſted the ſurgeon to take twelve or fourteen ounces of blood from my arm, and to give me a ſtrong doſe of calomel. This was on Monday morning the 19th. inſt., the attack having commenced on the evening of Saturday the 17th. The pain of the head and eyes was conſiderably relieved by the bleeding,—the reſtleſſneſs was alſo in a ſlight degree diminiſhed—but the thirſt, with heat and dryneſs of ſkin, ſtill continued. I drank copiouſly of mild diluents, and the calomel acted freely as an evacuant; but ſtill I had no reſt, and paſſed a third night in extreme ſuffering, and without ſleep. On the 20th the pain was leſs excruciating, and the light leſs intolerable; but the other ſymptoms of fever remained,

together with an increaſed degree of languor and debility: I therefore avoided further evacuations, and took a ſaline medicine with camphire. The night was, again, moſt painfully reſtleſs, ſleep was wholly denied me, and I felt myſelf ſinking into extreme exhauſtion.

In the morning of the 21ſt. I was free from the high action of fever, the heat and pain had ſubſided, the pulſe was leſs quick, and I was in a copious perſpiration: but the whiteneſs of tongue remained, with a moſt haraſſing and unquenchable thirſt; and in proportion as the more violent ſymptoms abated, others, even more diſtreſſing if poſſible, ſupervened. My ſtrength and voice were gone; an indeſcribable uneaſineſs affected my whole body: I was attacked with an exhauſting diarrhæa; felt a moſt annihilating ſenſation at the ſcrobiculus cordis; and ſunk into a degree of languor and proſtration, not to be conceived.

I paſſed the day and night, under the moſt wearifome and diſtreſſing ſenſations, and with my bodily powers ſo rapidly declining, that I felt more and more enfeebled every

hour. On the 22d ſcarcely a hope remained of my recovery. Every energy of the ſyſtem ſeemed to be ſubdued, and the languor and proſtration of ſtrength had reached their extremeſt degree.

I now felt that my life only hung by a ſlender filament, and was conſcious that each half-hour might be my laſt. I was ſo reduced as to be no longer able to ſupport myſelf upon my ſide, in bed; but lay ſupine, and proſtrate, with my flaccid limbs ſtretched in full extenſion, and which, if they were lifted from their place, fell lifeleſs upon the ſame ſpot. A weakening diarrhæa continued, and a ſtill more debilitating vomiting was ſuperadded. Upon the ſlighteſt motion I fell into ſyncope, and was ſo utterly exhauſted as to faint if my head was raiſed from the pillow. My fauces were parched and dry, and I had the thirſt of Tantalus, together with a languid and ſinking ſenſation at the epigaſtrium, and a moſt diſtreſsful feeling of reſtleſsneſs and horror, over my whole frame. Every ſymptom beſpake the utmoſt debility and loſs of ſtrength, and it ſeemed to require only a ſigh to ſever the thread of life.

Thus ſituated, I contemplated the probable event, and having calmly reconciled the thought of dying, I endeavored, in broken whiſper, to utter a few words to the ſurgeon, for him to commit to paper, as my will; to which, with his guidance, a feeble and trembling hand traced my ſignature, but in characters which I now find to be ſcarcely legible. This ceremony was executed with the greateſt compoſure of mind, for I was never more collected, nor more tranquil. Death ſeemed to look me full in the face, at the time, but I received his commands to leave the world without a diſturbed emotion. In ſoft and tender regret, indeed, I lamented that I could not ſee my friends in England; nor caſt a laſt look of grateful affection upon my beloved mother, before I departed; but theſe privations, deeply ſorrowful as they were, alſo yielded to what ſeemed the inflexible decree of fate; and, in tranquil reſignation, I breathed a dying bleſſing to you all. Still, however reconciled to my fate, I felt that I ought not to reject the means of relief which my profeſſion offered, whilſt even a poſſibility remained of being ſaved, I therefore made myſelf underſtood by Mr. Blackader, and expreſſed a wiſh to have large quantities of bark and opium,

with wine, and the cold-bath. Colonel Hiſlop, the commanding officer, actuated by the moſt amiable feelings, very kindly expreſſed a wiſh that I ſhould be viſited by ſome of the medical gentlemen of the country. This was a propoſal to which I could form no poſſible objection; although my own ſenſations had dictated the remedies I meant to employ. Two of the moſt eminent practitioners of the colony were accordingly requeſted to ſee me, and it were ungrateful not to expreſs the acknowledgments I owe them for their friendly attention and advice. Happily their opinions very much accorded with my own, reſpecting the means to be uſed in the ſtage of the diſeaſe under which they ſaw me; and they approved of every part of my preſcription, the cold bath only excepted. I was wholly incapable of converſing with them, but their remarks to Mr. Blackader did not eſcape my ear, and not finding them ſufficiently ſatisfactory to carry conviction to my mind, reſpecting the impropriety of the bathing, their objections were overruled, and I reſolved not to forego, what my own concluſions, as well as my feelings, had repreſented as a ſovereign remedy.

The fierce ardor of fever; the painful throbbing of the head and eyes; and the pungent dryneſs of ſkin, were very much diminiſhed; and the pulſe, though enfeebled, was not much quicker than in health; the preſcribed remedies were, therefore, uſed with great freedom. Happily the opium quickly arreſted the reaching, and alſo the diarrhæa, which allowed the bark and wine, and bathing to be employed with leſs reſerve; and I perſevered with ſuch effect, that in the courſe of only a few hours, I had no leſs than *ſix ounces* of the powder of bark (ſwallowed and otherwiſe adminiſtered) and a bottle of ſound old hock remaining in my ſtomach and bowels.

Of the wine and bathing I know not in what terms to ſpeak, for language has no power to expreſs the delightful ſenſations which theſe moſt grateful remedies conveyed to my exhauſted frame. I was more refreſhed by them, more revived, and more relieved, than words can poſſibly deſcribe. To the bark and opium I was perhaps quite as much indebted, but their effects were leſs immediate, and leſs ſenſible. For many years Bacchus and I had been ſtrangers. Now I was to take wine as a medical potion; and in

order to rank it high in this character, the commiſſary had kindly ſent me ſome very choice old hock, which, in great truth, was both food and medicine. It was nectar and ambroſia—nay more, it was life and health to me! The peculiar and exquiſite ſenſations I experienced, when the firſt glaſs of it wetted my parched lips, and cooled my burning ſtomach, will be remembered to my lateſt hour. They were heavenly! The nectareous drinks of the gods—unleſs the gods could drink them in "yellow" fever—were never ſo delicious!

The bathing was ſcarcely inferior to the wine, for at a moment when ineffable languor was rapidly ſinking my weakened body to the grave, I was lifted out of my bed, into an empty bathing tub, and calabaſhes of cold ſea water were daſhed upon my naked perſon, with an effect which exceeds all deſcription. Not only were the ſenſations of the moment inconceivably refreſhing and delightful, but the more durable and important benefits were equally ſtriking. Previous to bathing I fainted, only on my head being lifted up from the pillow; but after being taken out of the bathing tub, I was able, with

due ſupport, to ſit up for nearly ten minutes, while three perſons, with rough cloths, rubbed me dry.

Although I was not delirious, I perceived a peculiar ſenſe of confuſion, or horror about me at various times during this day, and lapſed occaſionally into a ſort of ſtupor, approaching to coma, but it did not proceed to ſuch a degree as to deprive me of conſciouſneſs; the powers of memory and volition were ſtill at my command; and, when I was rouſed, it was remarked that my mental faculties were quite collected and unimpaired: and, as a proof that I was not inſenſible to what paſſed in the room, I may tell you that I felt, with full force, all the probability of the remark, and was too well aware how ſtrongly appearances might juſtify it, when I heard ſome of the officers exclaim, as they turned away, after ſilently looking at me through my muſquito curtain, "*Ah poor doctor! we ſhall never ſee him again!*"

This had been my worſt day—the feelings of the night I cannot attempt to deſcribe. All was horror, horror, reſtleſs deadly horror! The ſickened mind became unſettled as its

troubled manſion, and, like the body, was only ſenſible to wretchedneſs and horror!

The dawn of the next day ſeemed like an introduction to a new exiſtence. The indeſcribable and diſtreſſing ſenſations, which had ſo cruelly afflicted me, were in ſome degree diminiſhed, and the violence of the other ſymptoms ſlightly moderated: — an important change indeed! But, however happy, it was ſuch as no man need be anxious to experience. Circumſtanced as I then was, to me it had all the ſemblance of a change from death to life: but with ſuch extreme miſery and horror was it accompanied, that could theſe have continued many hours longer, life would have been bought at too dear a purchaſe, to have it regained at ſuch a price. The mind was crowded with confuſed and incoherent ideas, painting the world as new, and altogether different from that I had ſo lately left; indeed ſo diſtorted and unnatural did every thing ſeem around me, that I felt a kind of heſitation whether to accept of my return to life, or proceed onward to the grave, which I ſaw wide open before me. This was the ſixth day. The morning was dark and gloomy, and highly calculated to favor the

ſombre impreſſions of my mind. It rained and blew; fierce lightning tore the heavens, and loud thunder, burſting from the clouds, ruptured the elements into uniſon with the confuſion and diſorder with which my feelings were pervaded. All nature ſeemed to partake of the unaccountable change, and to adminiſter to the horrors which beſet me. The whole order of things was inverted, and, for a time, I could not diveſt myſelf of the idea that the heavens were agitated with the convulſive throes of bringing forth a new world. One whole day, and a ſad long night were thus dragged out in all the tumult and diſtreſs of regaining an exiſtence, which only a day or two before, I had given up almoſt without a ſigh.

After I had eſcaped from theſe diſtracting incoherences, I perceived the ſymptoms of the diſeaſe gradually declining, and, by perſiſting in the uſe of my remedies, I am become better reconciled to the world, and again recogniſe it as the ſame which I had ſo quietly reſigned. I continued to drink moſt liberally of old hock, and took the bark in immoderate quantity, the extent and frequency of the doſe being limited only by the power of the

ſtomach and bowels to retain it. The bathing was alſo repeated with inexpreſſible comfort to my languid and trembling frame. I alſo took copious draughts of bottled porter, which I found to be an exceedingly grateful and refreſhing drink, as well as one of my moſt effectual remedies.

The thirſt, and dryneſs of the mouth, lips, and teeth continued to annoy me until the eighth day. Great languor and proſtration of ſtrength were ſtill preſent on the ninth; as were likewiſe, at intervals, the diſtreſsful ſenſations of horror and wretchedneſs. On the tenth, the return of ſtrength was perceptible, although I had much dizzineſs of head, and faintneſs, and was afflicted with a troubleſome deafneſs, which I am ſorry to add is ſtill the companion of my convaleſcence. Since the tenth day my recovery has been very rapid. The debility is not ſo great as might have been expected, and my appetite is ſtrong and craving. Dainties in eating are not to be had, and fortunately I do not require them; for no turtle feaſt was ever enjoyed with greater reliſh than I now take, at noon, my plain Engliſh fare, of a cruſt

of bread, with a morſel of cheeſe, and a deep draught of bottled porter.

Many apologies are due for troubling you with this tedious detail of *self*; for ſadly tedious I fear you will find it, notwithſtanding my having confined my pen, as much as poſſible, to a bare narration of the feelings I experienced, and the perils I have had to encounter, and concerning which I have fondly imagined that friendſhip would lead you to experience a lively intereſt. I ſhould tell you that throughout the whole period of the diſeaſe I have not had any mark of that yellowneſs from which this fever has been erroneouſly named.

LETTER XIII.

Hoſpitality and friendly attentions of the coloniſts towards the author. He makes a convaleſcent viſit at "the Hope." Feels a threatening of relapſe at the time of the ſpring tides. Mr. Blackader, the author's colleague, attacked with fever. Succeſsful treatment of his caſe. Means early employed. Short wet ſeaſon. Author reſumes the hoſpital duty at Mahaica. Decreaſed ſickneſs at that ſtation. Action of the Pelican ſloop with the Medea French frigate. Faithful conduct of Mr. Kendall's and Mr. Green's ſlaves. Their inhumanity. Its probable cauſe. Theft committed by two ſlaves. Their obſtinacy in denying it. Stratagem of an old ſlave in diſcovering it.

Plantation Hope, Mahaica, Oct. 21.

HAD I not already endeavored to do juſtice to the univerſal hoſpitality which prevails in theſe colonies, I might enumerate, in proof of it, the many inſtances of friendly attention which I have experienced during the convaleſcence from my late attack of fever. Every table was at my command, every houſe my home, and every planter my friend. If it were not an injuſtice to particularize, I might mention to you the ſignal obligations I owe to captain MacRae, one of the gentlemen of the colony, now holding a company in the corps of South

American rangers, and to his brother, from whoſe houſe I have now the pleaſure to addreſs you. The captain made me daily viſits, and watched me with all the care even of fraternal ſolicitude, during my ſickneſs; and as ſoon as he ſaw me able to be moved, he not only propoſed that I ſhould make his brother's houſe my convaleſcent home, but, without any trouble or concern on my own part, provided me the means of conveyance, and himſelf accommpanied me hither; where I have been received with the moſt cordial welcome, entertained with unaffected urbanity, and, I may ſay, nurſed with ſincere—nay, affectionate attention by his brother; for not only have the beſt accomodations of the houſe been mine, but the friendſhip of this generous man has led him to procure all the reſtoratives of the neighbourhood for the re-eſtabliſhment of my health, and the recovery of my loſt ſtrength.

Since my arrival, here, I have felt very ſtrong ſymptoms of relapſe, but, by the powerful aid of bark and Madeira wine, the threatened return of fever has been ſucceſsfully reſiſted. I had been ſtrongly cautioned by the gentlemen of the colony to "beware

of *the ſprings*"—implying that the diſeaſe would be likely to renew its attack at the full of the moon: I was, therefore, prepared to meet the firſt uneaſy feelings with the appropriate remedies. On the fourteenth inſtant my head was in pain, my limbs ached, and I had general feelings of languor and reſtleſſneſs about me; when, recollecting the remark ſo often made to me, and which had been in ſome meaſure confirmed by my own obſervations in the hoſpital, I turned to the almanack and found that the moon was to be at the full on the ſixteenth, therefore, without delay, I had recourſe to the bark, and drank a two-fold portion of wine, but the ſymptoms continued to menace me with a renewal of fever until the eighteenth, after which they ſubſided, preciſely as I had been aſſured would happen, with *the decline of the ſpring tides.*

I am extremely ſorry to inform you that, ſince my laſt letter giving you an account of my own illneſs, Mr. Blackader, to whoſe unwearied attentions I was ſo eſſentially indebted during my confinement, has received a rude viſit from our common enemy: at the ſame time it gives me ſincere pleaſure to add that he is recovered, and that the diſeaſe has been

ſlighter, and his ſufferings leſs ſevere, than in my own caſe; which I think we are juſtified in attributing to the attack being leſs inſidious, and his having been twice blooded within the firſt twelve hours of the diſeaſe. We were both of opinion that if I had uſed venæſection earlier I ſhould have ſuffered leſs, and it is probable that if I had not been blooded at all, I ſhould not have held the pen to you now: we, therefore, employed our means with more boldneſs and promptitude, when Mr. Blackader was attacked, and thereby prevented the conſuming action of the fever from producing the ſtill more deſtructive ſymptoms of exhauſtion. Others I am aware might tell you that the extreme languor and proſtration of ſtrength, which had ſo nearly ſunk me to the grave, were *induced* by the bleeding—although I feel little doubt but they aroſe from the *neglect* of it, and were the effect of the exhauſting ſymptoms which prevailed at the commencement of the diſeaſe, and which might have been moderated by earlier venæſection, and prevented from throwing the whole ſyſtem into a ſtate of debility, which at one time rendered my ſituation nearly as hopeleſs as it was alarming. After all, I lament that this is only matter of

opinion, however much experience may have confirmed it, in my mind, as an eſtabliſhed fact.

It is now ſaid to be the ſhort dry ſeaſon, but within the few laſt days we have had many heavy ſhowers of rain, and more wet has fallen than is common in this month. Still the weather, and our muddy roads are greatly improved, and what is more important, we have far leſs of ſickneſs. Since my removal from La Bourgade to Mr. Mac-Rae's, I have reſumed my attendance at the Mahaica hoſpital, and I have great ſatisfaction in being able to remark to you that the number of patients is not one-ſixth ſo great, nor their diſeaſes by any means ſo malignant, as when I was here before.

We have juſt heard of a ſevere action which has been fought off Guadalope, between the Pelican ſloop of eighteen guns, captain Serle, and the Medea French frigate, and which adds another ſplendid trophy to our high-laurelled navy. The Pelican not only defeated the Medea, but took from her a prize ſtore-ſhip, which was under her protection, and it is believed ſhe would have

captured the frigate alſo, had not two others come out of Guadalope to her relief. Theſe took back her prize, but the ſloop eſcaped from them all; and it is ſaid that Victor Hugues has releaſed twelve of the Pelican's men, who were taken on board the ſtore-ſhip, on account of their bravery, and their ſpirited conduct in fighting a veſſel of ſuch ſuperior force.

Since my arrival at my friendly convaleſcent quarters, at the Hope, two circumſtances have offered to my notice, which afford very ſtriking examples of the character of ſlaves, and which you would not excuſe me were I to omit noting. A French privateer, which, for ſome time paſt, had been lurking about the leeward coaſt of theſe colonies, had captured a conſiderable number of ſmall prizes, and in particular ſeveral of the planters' boats, which had been in the habit of going down to Eſſequibo to fetch plantains, as proviſions for the ſlaves. Among theſe, two boats lately fell into their hands, belonging to Mr. Kendall and Mr. Green, the latter of whom reſides not far diſtant from the Hope; but on account of the privateer not having hands enough, on board, to man

all her prizes, the negroes of Mr. Kendall's boat were put on board the boat belonging to Mr. Green, and three or four ſailors ſent from the privateer to carry them into Trinidad. On the paſſage the Frenchmen talked much to the negroes about liberty, equality, and the rights of man, in all the common jargon of the revolution; holding out to them the high enjoyment of gaining their freedom; and aſſuring them that they would be carried from Trinidad to Guadalope, where they would be releaſed from their ſlavery, become fellow-citizens, and remain in future *their own maſters*. But theſe poor blacks, having been treated with great kindneſs and humanity by their owners, and not having been bred in the modern Gallic ſchool, could not be made to comprehend the faſcinating doctrine of equality, and therefore perverſely rejected the proffered *French Liberty*; and inſtead of rejoicing, as it was ſuppoſed they would, to accept their freedom from the hands of theſe revolutionary republicans, they concerted a plan to reſcue the boat, and take it back to their maſters; in which attempt they met with complete ſucceſs, but unhappily it was attended with that ſavage inhumanity which characteriſes the Africans.

A litle before they came within ſight of Trinidad they ſeized an opportunity of riſing upon the Frenchmen, and, not ſatisfied with ſubduing them, they murdered every one of them, and threw their mangled bodies into the ſea: then, like faithful ſlaves, put the boat about, and made the beſt of their way up the coaſt, returning, much pleaſed, to their owners, and to their taſk of ſlavery. The party conſiſted of five negroes belonging to Mr. Kendall, and three (two men and a boy) belonging to Mr. Green. On my aſking them why they did not bring the Frenchmen on ſhore as priſoners, inſtead of killing them, their reply ſpake one of the unhappy truths of ſlavery, and proved that the lives of theſe unfortunate Frenchmen were ſacrificed to an unjuſt law always operating againſt the negroes. "*Ah Maſſa*," ſaid they "*we 'fraid 'em tell lies upon us, and him people always believe Backra man ſooner as Negro ..... ſo we tink it beſt for kill 'em all.*"—Theſe poor ſlaves were aware that againſt the evidence of a white man, whether it were true or falſe, they could not be heard; therefore, to prevent the poſſibility of any falſe reports of their priſoners operating to their prejudice, they deemed it wiſe to ſecure themſelves the

privilege of giving their teſtimony in the cauſe of truth, by deſtroying thoſe whoſe voices might have prevented it.

The other circumſtance was likewiſe one in which the negroes were equally faithful to each other, and equally acted in concert; but it was in a widely different cauſe. A gentleman coming in a boat from the town to his brother's houſe upon this coaſt, finding the tide ſlacken before he arrived, came on ſhore, and proceeded the remainder of the way by land, leaving his negroes to follow him in the boat; in which he left a trunk containing his clothes, a brace of piſtols, and a pocket-book with bills and notes to the amount of £2000. The negroes arrived ſafely with the ſucceeding tide, but brought the unfortunate intelligence, that the boat had been ſwamped in a heavy ſurf, and the trunk waſhed overboard and loſt in the ſea. This happened many weeks ago, and for ſome time after the reported accident the coaſt was very carefully ſearched, at each ebb of the tide, in the hope that the ſtrong flowing of the water might have caſt the trunk on ſhore, and that it might be found on the beach; but it never appeared, and was at length given up as loſt. A few

days ago, the owner of it happening to call in at a public auction, he there recogniſed a brace of piſtols which were expoſed for ſale, as the identical piſtols which had been loſt in his trunk. From this circumſtance it became manifeſt, that either the trunk muſt have been found, or it had never been loſt: and ſuſpicion falling upon the negroes, they were minutely examined as to the fact, but they moſt poſitively denied having any knowledge of the trunk or piſtols, ſince the time when the boat was ſwamped. Still the inquiry, in ſome degree, countenanced the ſuſpicion, and ſeemed to ſtrengthen the probability that the things ſaid to have been loſt had been ſtolen by the negroes, under whoſe charge they had been left in the boat. The piſtols were remarkable, and they exhibited no ruſt, nor any other appearance of injury; which muſt have been the caſe, in the event of their having been at the bottom of the ſea. Perſuaſions, threats, and entreaties were equally unavailing: both the negroes ſolemnly proteſted that the trunk had been waſhed out of the boat into the ocean, and that they had never ſeen either that or the piſtols ſince. On this, a very ſtrict inquiry was made, proceeding ſtep by ſtep from the auctioneer, and the piſtols were regularly

traced back to theſe very negroes, notwithſtanding all their poſitive and unſhaken aſſertions. They were accordingly examined again, and being told to whom they delivered them, and through whoſe hands they had paſſed in ſucceſſion to the auctioneer, they were at laſt brought to confeſs that they had ſold the piſtols; but ſtill they moſt obſtinately inſiſted that they had found them, alone, upon the beach, ſome days after the boat was ſwamped, and denied all knowledge regarding the trunk, idly pretending that the piſtols had fallen out in the ſea, and been brought on ſhore with the tide: but this was too barefaced, and their conduct could no longer be tolerated:—when the piſtols began to ſwim, it was time to ſpeak in plain terms: 2000*l.* was a ſerious ſum, and it was now evident that the trunk had never ſeen the depth of the ocean; the negroes were therefore told, that unleſs they would acknowledge what had become of it, they ſhould be ſeverely flogged, and the puniſhment repeated every morning, until they ſhould confeſs the truth. But every threat was in vain! They were, conſequently, led out to be puniſhed: yet their maſter was humane, and always felt great reluctance in puniſhing his ſlaves; wherefore after

they were tied down, the laſh was ſuſpended, and a pardon promiſed them, if they would give the information required. But no! The whip inſpired no terrors, and they perſevered in vowing their innocence reſpecting all but the piſtols. The drivers were accordingly directed to let the whips fall; and after giving them a few laſhes, the puniſhment was again ſuſpended, and the offer of forgiveneſs repeated, if they would tell what they had done with the pocket-book and the clothes; but they were as perverſely deaf to puniſhment, as to threats and entreaties, and denied the truth as obſtinately as ever. Accordingly the ſtripes were repeated, and they were afterwards put into the ſtocks, in ſeparate places of confinement, for the night. In the courſe of the ſame evening, from inquiries made among the negroes of an adjoining eſtate, ſome traces were diſcovered of the trunk, and one of the ſhirts which it had contained. This was accordingly told to each of the two negroes who had been puniſhed; but they *ſtill perſiſted* in aſſerting their innocence. The following morning they were again led to the ſtake, but before their puniſhment was renewed, the offer was repeated to releaſe and forgive them if they would confeſs; yet they

ſtill defied the whip, and ſubmitted to be puniſhed a ſecond time without making any further diſcovery; and, indeed, from every part of their conduct it is highly probable that they would have ſuffered death, rather than have impeached each other, or betrayed the fact: but, fortunately, ſtratagem ſucceeded in attaining what force could never have effected.

An old and faithful negro named Peter, having conceived a plan to bring them to confeſſion, came to his maſter to beg a bottle of rum, ſaying, "*If Maſſa gib Peter one bottle of rum, Peter tink he can find him trunk for Maſſa.*"

Great confidence had always been placed in this man, therefore, without aſking many queſtions, the rum was given to him as he deſired; and, true enough! the truſty Peter returned to his maſter, only a few hours after, with a full and correct hiſtory of the trunk and its contents.

The ſtratagem he had formed ſucceeded moſt completely, and Peter obtained from each of the negroes a detailed and ſimilar ac-

count of the whole affair. He went firſt to Anthony, and under the ſhow of ſympathy compaſſionated his ſufferings, and condemned the injuſtice of his puniſhment; then, with ſeeming kindneſs, and a parade of privacy, offered him ſome rum, and repeated it glaſs after glaſs, until the unſuſpecting 'Tony was quite intoxicated.

Now was Peter's time to beat the charge; which he did by complaining of the other negro, Anthony's colleague, as a treacherous hypocrite, and rouſing the indignation of 'Tony againſt him, by accuſing him of having broken his faith, and told all about the trunk; adding that he had thus procured his own pardon and releaſe, "*whilſt only poor Tony left in 'em 'tocks to be flogged again to-morrow.*" 'Tony was ſtruck with horror on hearing that his comrade had betrayed him, and in the heat of his abuſe, and execration, divulged to the ſubtle Peter the whole ſecret—who then attempted to calm him, by ſaying, that as he alſo now told the truth, he would apply to his maſter, begging him to releaſe "*'Tony as well as t'other.*" Having by this fineſſe obtained the whole hiſtory from Anthony, Peter next went to the place where the other

negro was confined, taking with him the remainder of the rum, and proceeding in the ſame manner, rebuked him for not telling the truth, and obtaining his pardon and releaſe as 'Tony had done, ſaying—"*Why you no tell too! den Maſſa no flog you again, but forgive you, and let you free like 'Tony.*" This poor man being heated with rum, was deceived like the other, and expreſſed himſelf ſhocked at the baſe cowardice of his comrade in having betrayed their ſecret, in order to avoid further puniſhment. The wily old Peter ſtill provoking his anger towards 'Tony, led him on to diſcloſe all the facts, which, correſponding with the details of the other, confirmed their correctneſs, and left not a doubt but the ſtatement of each was founded in truth.

Having thus far ſucceeded, Peter came to his maſter with the empty bottle, and relating the whole of his proceedings, in obtaining the information, told him how the trunk and its contents had been diſpoſed of, and where ſeveral of the things might ſtill be found.

It proved, that inſtead of the trunk being waſhed overboard, the two negroes, who

had been left to bring on the boat, had ſtolen it, and had diſpoſed of its contents, by ſelling ſome, and depoſiting others with the ſlaves of the adjoining plantations; upon whom ſeveral of the articles of wearing apparel were found the next morning, when Anthony and his comrade, ſtill manacled, were led by Peter to the ſpot, in order that they might point out to him where they were concealed.

Not knowing the value of the bills and notes, nor how to negociate them, the contents of the pocket-book met the ſame fate, as the unfortunate Frenchmen on board of Mr. Green's boat, and upon the ſame principle:—they were deſtroyed, and thrown into the ſea, leſt, as the negroes expreſſed it, they ſhould *tell lies upon them!* for their ignorant prejudices repreſent letters, and other writings, in the ſame dangerous character as the tongues of white men! Although the bills and notes were irrecoverably loſt, ſtill it afforded conſiderable ſatisfaction, to know that they had not fallen into the hands of any one who might bring them to an illicit market; for, that there were perſons in the colony unprincipled enough to have received them, upon

very eaſy terms, from the negroes, was but too manifeſt, from the fact of the piſtols, which had not gone from Anthony, or his comrade, or *any of their colour*, in a direct line to the auctioneer!

LETTER XIV.

News from England implies a wide ſpreading war, and a transformation of the coalition againſt France. Spaniſh war a joyous occurrence to Engliſh ſailors. Strange pretence urged by the Spaniſh government. Intereſting ſituation of the Engliſh upon the coaſt of South America. Arrival of medical officers at Demarara. Author receives inſtructions to continue in Guiana. Regret on account of his letters being forwarded to St. Domingo. Mr. Blackader and the author again well. Mr. Jordan attacked with fever. Relapſes of fever at the time of the ſpring tides. Contemplations on the ſubject of England, after eſcaping from the yellow fever. Sick reports from the Iſlands. Phyſicians deſtroyed. Death of Col. Gammell. The happy proſpect of returning to England unproſperous to the officers of the 93d. regiment. Prediction of Col. Gammell on leaving Demarara. Effect of the dry ſeaſon—with reſpect to the ſick—with reſpect to the roads. Temperature of climate. Range of the thermometer. A deputy purveyor and hoſpital mates arrive at Demarara. Sir Ralph Abercromby returns to England. General Graham left in command. Rumour of an expected attack from Surinam. A Weſt India bed. A female negro-driver. Trifles ſometimes become matters of importance. Cuſtom reſpecting beef—reſpecting funerals. Miſtake of an Engliſh lady.

La Bourgade, Nov. 17.

FOR ſome time paſt we have been anxiouſly looking for news from England. Papers are at length arrived, and we read, that inſtead of

drawing nigh to a peace, we are only now entering upon a wide-ſpreading war. The great coalition againſt France appears to be falling away—or rather to be veering round, and to point againſt the defenders, inſtead of the diſturbers of mankind! Our ſailors will not lament that the Spaniards have thrown away the ſcabbard, and joined the liſt of their enemies; for, with them, they always expect to exchange cannon-ball, for the more fulminating ore of the Mexican mines.

Amongſt the flimſy pretences urged by Spain for this act of folly, and ſelf-degradation, we read that the capture of theſe colonies is wrought up into a mighty offence. Poor ſlaves of the *great nation*, they muſt plead ſomething, however abſurd! They are told to do it: and in their ſhameleſs imbecility, it only remains to them ..... to obey!

By inſpecting the map you will find that our ſituation upon this coaſt is now rendered peculiarly intereſting, having enemies on each ſide, the wild Indians and deep woods behind, and the foaming ocean before us. The Spaniards are on our left, and to leeward; the Dutch and French to windward on our

right;—close in our rear are heavy and impenetrable forests, inhabited by wild and naked tribes; and our whole front is bounded by the open sea. Our new foes will have more cause of alarm from us, than we can possibly have from them:—being to leeward of us, we shall be able to run down, at any time, and surprize them at Trinidad, or the Caraccas: whereas it might cost them a voyage of many days to make their passage, against the trade winds, far enough to annoy us with any effect: further, the superiority of our fleet gives us so entirely the command of the coast, that the Spanish vessels may be expected to afford a plentiful harvest to our sloops and privateers.

An express announcing the arrival of a reinforcement of medical officers from Martinique called me, somewhat suddenly, from my hospitable convalescent quarters, at Mahaica. On hearing that these gentlemen were come, the suggestion naturally occurred, that it was a detachment from the hospital staff of the Charibbee islands, sent to relieve the division of the St. Domingo staff, and to set us at liberty to proceed to our original destination: but so far from this being the case, the rein-

forcement conſiſts only of a garriſon ſurgeon and mate; and inſtead of orders being ſent to us to ſet off for St. Domingo, I have received copies of hoſpital papers, and inſtructions for my guidance, in directing the duties of the medical department of theſe colonies.

Thus it would ſeem that ſome determination has been taken at head quarters, regarding us; and that in future we are to be attached to the hoſpital ſtaff of the Charibbee iſlands.

In this I know of no greater regret I ſhall experience, than that of being prevented from meeting the kind remembrances of my friends, which I had anxiouſly looked to, as accumulating for me at St. Domingo, during many months paſt. At the ſame time I grieve to know, that another period, equally long, may yet be conſumed before I can hear from you, notwithſtanding that preſent appearances ſeem to fix Guiana as my permanent home.

I now feel it a ſevere mortification, that I ſhould have ſo long arranged for my letters to be ſent to St. Domingo, but I hope to be more fortunate in ſaying ..... write to me *at Demarara.*

Of myſelf I need not ſpeak, for my ſtrength is ſo rapidly returning that I ſcarcely belong either to the liſt of ſick or convaleſcents. My comrade, Mr. Blackader, is alſo growing ſtrong, and forgetting his invalid feelings, but Mr. Jordan, one of my aſſiſtants, has ſuffered a late attack, from which, after much danger, he is only ſlowly recovering. Having before mentioned to you the circumſtance of the relapſes of fever, correſponding remarkably with the periods of the moon, I may now tell you, that the fact was particularly noticed in the caſe of this gentleman. He ſuffered a relapſe during his early convaleſcence, and it was remarked that, on the ſame day, four of the patients in the hoſpital had a renewed attack of the fever. This coincidence led us to look at the almanack, when it was found to be the day previous to the change of the moon.

Mr. Blackader with our recovering aſſiſtant and myſelf, all in different ſtages of convaleſcence, having met together a few evenings ago, it happened that the converſation turned from yellow fever, and other ills, to the many comforts of our dear England; and if you could know how gratefully our whole minds were abſorbed on this inexhauſti-

ble ſubject, and the high delight which the converſation led us to contemplate, in returning to the tranquil enjoyments of that happy and ſalubrious home, you might almoſt envy us a long abſence, and the danger of never ſeeing our native iſland again!

The reports from Martinique, Grenada, and St. Lucie, reſpecting the ravages of diſeaſe, I am ſorry to find, are not more favorable than our own. The great ſcourge of the climate has made ſad havoc in theſe iſlands, and the medical officers, we are told, have ſuffered in full proportion. Of the phyſicians who were attached to the windward expedition, four have already fallen victims to diſeaſe—viz. Doctors Riollay, Story, Clifton, and Suttleworth. With ſincere grief I likewiſe hear of the death of poor Colonel Gammell, who ſo lately left us in the fullneſs of health. In his loſs the ſervice has to lament a moſt valuable officer. The removal of this gentleman and his comrades of the 93d regiment from theſe colonies, inſtead of being accompanied with all the comfort which attached to the proſpect of returning to England, ſeems to have been but the ſignal of unhappy events. While they remained together at Berbiſche,

and under Colonel Gammell's excellent rules of command, the whole of the officers were ſingularly healthy, but the ſuſpenſion of the regular ſyſtem he had maintained, and a total relaxation from duty, together with the hurry of embarkation, and perhaps the liberal glaſs at parting from other comrades, while they have unfortunately removed the happy exemption from diſeaſe, which thoſe gentlemen had enjoyed, have alſo proved the high utility of a rigid and correct diſcipline in theſe deſtructive regions.

One of the officers of the 93d died at Demarara, whither he had arrived from Berbiſche, preparatory to going on board the ſhip in which he was to have proceeded to England: now, we hear of the death of Colonel Gammell at Martinique: and a third officer, of the ſame regiment, was prevented from embarking with his comrades by an attack of fever, which had nearly deprived him of life, and which ſtill detains him among us. The Colonel left Demarara at the time I was lying dangerouſly ill, and was one of the friends who on turning from my bed-ſide, ſhook his head and deſpaired of ever ſeeing me again. Alas! I grieve to find him ſo correct in the

fact, although his apprehenſions did not go to the event preciſely as it occurred—for little did he expect that it would be my lot to live, and thus ſoon deplore his death!

At the La Bourgade hoſpital, as well as at Mahaica, we feel the effect of the preſent dry ſeaſon, the numbers on our ſick-liſt being conſiderably leſs than for ſeveral months paſt, yet the dread remains of expiring diſeaſe have lately afforded us too frequent opportunities of proſecuting the comparative examinations I before mentioned to you, and we have availed ourſelves of them to a conſiderable extent. Among the advantages ariſing from the dry weather with which theſe colonies have lately been bleſſed, no one is more conſpicuous than the improvement which it has effected in our deep and muddy roads. Hitherto they have been intolerably bad, and indeed, on account of the depth of wet and ſtiff clay, almoſt impaſſable. At preſent they are dry, and from being upon a perfect level, and the clay being hardened and worn ſmooth, they are as fine roads for travelling as the very beſt that you have in England.

Since the weather has been ſettled, we

find the thermometer riſe occaſionally at noon as high as 86 or 87—uſually it has been from 82 to 85. This climate is perhaps one of the moſt ſteady in the world, the range of the thermometer, upon the cultivated part of the coaſt, being only from 11 to 15 degrees. Moſt commonly the mercury is at 73 at ſix o'clock in the morning—and at noon 84. The loweſt I have ſeen it, at any time, was 72—and the higheſt 87. From living in conſtant heat and relaxation our bodies become highly ſenſible to cold, and I ſometimes feel my fingers chilly, as in an autumn morning in England, although the thermometer ſtands as high as 74.

Since the arrival of the garriſon ſurgeon and aſſiſtant, our department has been further ſtrengthened with the addition of a deputy purveyor, and ſome hoſpital mates. Theſe gentlemen are come in good time to enjoy the evening ſhade of our toils. We have ſupported the ſevere labour and fatigue of the ſickly ſeaſon without them, and they now find us well ſeaſoned in our duty, and with our hoſpitals far leſs crowded. When we moſt wanted them, their ſervices were moſt required in the iſlands, and now we have leſs

occaſion for them, they can beſt be ſpared. However I am buſily engaged in making up the returns, and all the neceſſary accounts and hoſpital papers, from the time of our arrival in theſe colonies, and ſhall hope ſoon to be relieved from one branch of my late duty, by reſigning to our newly arrived deputy purveyor the buſineſs of his department.

The gentlemen who have joined us bring much news of the iſlands, and of the army, but we do not learn that any attack is at preſent meditated upon Guadaloupe. Indeed the army ſeems to have lapſed into a ſtate of repoſe, and probably no active operations will be reſumed, until the return of the commander in chief from England; whither he is gone, it is ſuppoſed, to concert meaſures for purſuing the object of the expedition: and, perhaps, with the new campaign, new projects may be formed, and new enterprizes undertaken. During the abſence of Sir Ralph Abercromby, General Graham is left in command.

Rumour has lately threatened us with an attack from Surinam, but we feel no alarm on this ſubject; having an adequate force to

meet the enemy at ſea, and troops enough, on ſhore, to reſiſt any detachment which the Dutch might be able to ſend from that colony.

I fear you will find this letter to conſiſt of a ſtrange and tedious melange, but as you deſire to hear of all that ſtrikes me as uncommon or peculiar, I ought not to omit mentioning to you the form of a bed, which I ſaw lately at the houſe of one of the richeſt planters in the colony. Its conſtruction was novel, but extremely well contrived for the climate. The bed was of ample width, and from being covered with a hard mattreſs, might have ſeemed well calculated for avoiding the inconvenience of exceſſive heat; but Weſt Indian luxury had gone further, and formed the bedſtead into two different ſtages, the one about eight inches higher than the other, ſo as, while lying under the ſame covering, completely to ſeparate the mulatto nymph from her lord. What would the fairer dames of Europe ſay to ſuch a contrivance, calculated to drive them away, at pleaſure, to the lower ſtage of a huſband's bed?

On my way down the coaſt from Ma-

haica, I alſo obſerved among the ſlaves, what to me was a novelty; although I was told, by a gentleman of the colony, that it was by no means uncommon. In one of the fields we paſſed a gang of negroes employed at their labour, with a female driver carrying the whip at their backs. On my remarking that it was not a becoming duty for the *beau ſexe* —that the nature of the lady might be too tender to admit of her correcting the ſtrong— and her arm too feeble to enable her to chaſtiſe the idle, my companion replied, that I was much miſtaken, for that on the contrary the "*women drivers*," were ſometimes peculiarly ſevere, and often corrected the ſtouteſt ſlaves with no feeble arm.

The following anecdote forces upon my mind a fact which is perhaps univerſally obſerved, viz. that, where the population is thin, the ſociety confined to a few, and the intercourſe with other places bounded by narrow limits, trifles gain importance, and occurrences which, in themſelves, are inſignificant, become ſubjects of converſation, and, in ſome degree, of intereſt. Hence the idle tattle of the tea table, and the unmeaning goſſip of a country village; and hence, I fear, you will

ſay, many of the uſeleſs remarks from the thinly inhabited coaſt of Guiana; for I often feel that I note to you circumſtances, which, in themſelves, are very unintereſting; yet if they make up any thing towards the habits of the people, or the character of the country where I am placed, fancy tells me, that you would not excuſe me were I to omit them. Indeed it only remains to me to mark ſuch events and circumſtances as paſs immediately before me, for the preſſing duties of my ſtation leave me neither time nor opportunity to engage in the reſearches of more remote utility. Accept then the anecdote alluded to, and place it to the account of the habits and cuſtoms of the people of Demarara:—at the expence of a lady from Barbadoes, it has afforded amuſement to the whole town of Stabroek.

From the great heat of climate, and the conſequent rapidity with which dead animal matter tends to reſume its gaſeous form, it is become a cuſtom, here, for the butcher, when he is about to kill beef, to ſecure the ſale of the whole carcaſe, before he ſlaughters the animal: for which purpoſe he ſends round a ticket or notice informing the inhabitants when the beef is to be killed, in order that

each perſon may put down what part, and what quantity he may wiſh to have.—It is likewiſe a cuſtom among the Dutch people to ſend round a notice when any perſon dies, inviting the neighbours to the funeral, and this paper is commonly ſuperſcribed in conſpicuous characters "*doed brief*." A Dutch officer having died, the burial ticket was ſent round in due form, when a lady, who had lately arrived from Barbadoes, reading the words "doed brief" put down her name for "twelve pounds and a half of the buttock." The meſſenger proceeding throughout the town with the notice, the miſtake was quickly known in every houſe, and the gloomy ſolemnity of the occaſion was interrupted by the various witticiſms, upon the Engliſh lady beſpeaking twelve pounds and a half of the Dutchman's buttock.

LETTER XV.

Author receives letters from England. Happy feelings on the occaſion. Commencement of the ſhort wet ſeaſon. A veſſel arrives—late from St. Domingo. Unhappy report of ſickneſs from that iſland. Further inſtances in proof of the coincidence of fever, and the lunar periods. Remarks upon the degenerate ſentiments and practices too often diſplayed in the army. Integrity a noxious weed. Counſel of an individual to his comrade reſpecting conſcience. Newspapers arrive to the date of Oct. 22d. Hopes of peace from Lord Malmſbury's miſſion to Paris.

Demarara, Nov. 30.

How ſhall I tell you the high delight of this happy week! Need I ſay more, than that three letters have reached me from England, being the firſt that I have received ſince leaving my home and my friends! A ſmall packet was ſent to my quarters by the commandant, having come with his letters from Martinique; and it would require a long abſence from thoſe you eſteem to enable you to judge of the tranſport I felt, when on fixing my eye upon the ſuperſcription, I unexpectedly diſcovered that they were letters from England. They had been put into the army-bag at the

war office, and being addreſſed to the head quarters of the " army in the Weſt Indies," were fortunately ſent to Martinique inſtead of St. Domingo, and from thence forwarded hither. Riches and luxury may boaſt their appalling pleaſures, but they offer no enjoyment ſo exquiſite—they move not the heart with ſuch tender and genial delight, as I experienced on this glad occaſion. One of the letters was of December, the two others of July and Auguſt laſt. I need not tell you that I read them over and over, until I could repeat them all verbatim : but not ſatisfied with this, I took them to my bed-ſide, and peruſed them again, after I had laid me down to reſt, in order to ſtrengthen the grateful aſſociation impreſſed upon my mind, and to protect it againſt the oblivious encroachments of Morpheus. It were impoſſible to deſcribe to you how ſweet was the repoſe, or how delighting the dreams of this moſt happy night! Suffice it to know that I was in London, and amidſt ye all, until morning! Not a word had I heard from any friend for nearly twelve long months before, and, in the interval, the fates had more than once nearly ſeparated me from them for ever. Now I learned that they were ſtill mindful of me; nor did any

ſombre ſhades cloud the intelligence they communicated: all were well and happy, and the joyous tidings came to me unalloyed.

I have again to anounce to you a change of ſeaſon in theſe weſtern regions. During the latter part of this month, we have had frequent returns of rain, and the weather is by no means ſo clear and fine as it was in October, and the beginning of November: but we are told that the ſhort wet ſeaſon is ſetting in, which will continue five or ſix weeks; and that we are afterwards to expect a long dry ſeaſon of three or four months.

I before remarked to you, that in conſequence of St. Domingo being ſo far to leeward, we very ſeldom receive any news from thence, except by way of England; but a veſſel is now arrived at Demarara, which was ſome weeks ago at St. Domingo, and I am ſorry to obſerve that the captain brings a very afflicting report of the ſickneſs which prevails in that colony; ſuch, alas! as renders all that we have ſuffered, here, comparatively trivial.

It has again occurred to us to witneſs a ſtriking coincidence of both the attack and

relapſe of fever, with the period of the ſpring tides. Yeſterday four of the convaleſcents in the hoſpital relapſed into ague, and to-day five new patients were admitted with the ſame diſeaſe, all of whom were likewiſe attacked yeſterday, only a few hours before the change of moon.

I can ſcarcely acquit myſelf for committing what I know will be a treſpaſs upon your feelings; yet I cannot avoid remarking that an immenſe field has lately opened to my contemplation—that a huge and frightful volume has been laid before me upon the important ſubject of army œconomy, and that I grieve to diſcover how much the high ſentiments of honor, which ought to attach to every military employment, are ſacrificed to perſonal intereſt, and ſuffered to degenerate into a mere traffic for pecuniary gain. It is lamentable to ſee how groſsly the ſacred laws of morality are outraged; and to know in what various inſtances the confidence repoſed in the ſervants of the public is abuſed. To ſuch an extent is it carried, in ſome inſtances, that a man of integrity and correct principles is regarded as a troubleſome exotic; and if he does not kindly take root in the corrupt

ſoil in which he is planted, he is ſhunned as an offenſive weed, which, but from the danger of pricking their fingers, many would deſire to pluck up, and caſt from among them.

What think you of a perſon holding a commiſſion in his Majeſty's ſervice gravely recommending to another officer "to lock up his conſcience in a ſtrong box before he comes out with the army again, and reſume it on his return." This *modeſt* gentleman might with great propriety have been aſked, whether *he* had ſtipulated to forſake his *preſent habits*, and renew his acquaintance, if he ever had any, with that troubleſome thing called conſcience on *his* return. But without being treated quite as ſeverely as he merited, the reply to his *friendly* advice, was ſuch as to diffuſe a bluſh, where, I much ſuſpect, none had been ſeated for a long time before; and, although there may be little hope of his changing either his principles or his conduct, I apprehend that, in future, he will be more cautious in avowing his *very honorable* ſentiments. Would it could be remarked that the opinions and practices of this man were ſingular: but, alas! there are too many proofs that they are far, *very far* from being uncommon; al-

though but few may be hardy enough to declare them.

You will know that we are enjoying one of the higheſt gratifications, which can be offered to us, during our abſence from England, when I tell you that a packet of newſpapers is juſt arrived up to as late a date as October 22d. We read in them with peculiar pleaſure, that notwithſtanding our recent quarrel with Spain, ſome hopes are entertained of a ſpeedy pacification between the contending powers. Indeed we find it rumoured that Lord Malmſbury is gone to Paris to negociate the terms. Tell me it is true. Say that the waſteful current of blood is about to ſtop—that we are ſoon to be recalled to our friends, and that we may find our happy England ſeated in the lap of peace, diſpenſing the mild bleſſings of induſtry and tranquillity.

LETTER. XVI.

South American Rangers go into Barracks near the hoſpital. Scene of drilling the negroes. Rough treatment uſed towards them, by non-commiſſioned officers of their own colour. Indians diverted with ſeeing the black "awkward ſquad." Britiſh ſoldiers confined in the guard room of the blacks. Reſpecting the policy of employing the negroes in arms. Neglect of religious obſervance. Attempt to remedy it. Author apprehenſive leſt his friend ſhould grow wearied with the ſubject of diſeaſe. Dutch and negro ſoldiers admitted into the Britiſh hoſpital. The ſymptoms of yellow fever change with the changes of ſeaſon. Coma the more prominent feature. An account of the fever publiſhed by Pere Labat. Difficult recovery from ſurgical maladies confined to Europeans. Uncommon caſe of recovery in a negro. Mr. Blackader leaves Guiana. An intended publication. Journal of a common ſoldier. Cuſtom reſpecting coloured offspring. Women of colour do not aſpire to the dignity of becoming wives to the whites. Author procures a horſe. Concerning the weather during the wet ſeaſon.

La Bourgade, Dec. 20.

WITH a becoming attention to the health and well-being of our new corps of Rangers, it has been deemed expedient to remove them from their encampment, and place them in barracks, in order to protect them from the

rains of the ſhort wet ſeaſon which now prevails: but unluckily for the peace and quiet of our neighbourhood, a large building has been fitted up for their accommodation, cloſe to the quarters of the medical officers, and we have all the noiſe, hurry, and confuſion of the whole regiment conſtantly before us. The ſcene amidſt which we are placed, by this arrangement, exceeds all conception, for it is of all degrees, and all varieties: but whether gay or ſerious, trivial or important, ſombre or ludicrous, it is always noiſy and turbulent. The activity and exertion which are required, to bring ſuch recruits into habits of method and order, are almoſt beyond belief. Where the whole, from being bred up in ignorance and conſtant toil, are very much upon a parallel with oxen taken from the plough, you will imagine what the moſt ſtupid of them muſt be, who form that ſelect body termed the "awkward ſquad." Upon beholding them when they firſt aſſemble, it might ſeem nearly as practicable to train a party of mules to carry arms. Tenfold the patience of the all-ſubmiſſive patriarch muſt be neceſſary to teach them the air and carriage of ſoldiers, and to bring them into any thing like military diſcipline.

The colonel, zealous for their improvement, and deſirous to make ſoldiers of them as ſpeedily as poſſible, is indefatigable in his attentions towards them ; and their drills are ſo frequent as to keep them in almoſt perpetual motion. The ridiculous miſtakes they commit —their egregious blunders—uncouth geſtures, and the extreme awkwardneſs of their movements, might be ſometimes diverting, were it not that our feelings are pained by the very rough treatment exhibited towards them, by the deſpotic ſerjeants and corporals of their own colour.

Frequently the "awkward ſquad" is led out to drill, with a proportion of non-commiſſioned officers nearly equal in number to the privates, each giving the word of command in the moſt authoritative manner, holding a ſhort pipe in his mouth, ſcarcely extending to the point of his noſe ; and each buſily marching his party to the right and left, backwards and forwards, and in every variety of direction, puſhing, pulling, and cuffing them about, as if they were machines, totally devoid of ſenſibility. Often when ſtepping forward to the words "left, right, left, right," a ſtout black ſerjeant ſuddenly ſeizes the leg of ſome one

who does not put it forth to his mind, and jerks it on with a force that endangers the diſlocation of his hip; when the poor fellow, forgetting that his body muſt maintain the military ſquare, whatever becomes of his limbs, looks down to ſee that he ſteps out better next time; but another ſerjeant inſtantly lodges his coarſe fiſt under his chin, and throws back his head with ſuch violence as almoſt to break his neck. Again fixed erect, he unfortunately looks to the left, inſtead of the right, when his angry commander graſping with both hands, twiſts round his neck, with a force nearly ſufficient to wring off his head. Still ſome unfortunate member forgets itſelf, and ſtrays out of place: an arm perhaps falls an inch before the line in which it ſhould hang; when one of the attending ſerjeants, or corporals, forces it back with a thurſt that might put out the ſhoulder. Next a knee is off its guard, and, bending itſelf into eaſe, meets with a ſevere rap from a huge grenadier with a ſhingle, or any other rough weapon which happens to be in his hand. Then, by ſome miſtake, the right leg advances inſtead of the left, or the left inſtead of the right, the remedy for which is a hard kick, or a rough blow upon the ſhin. Perhaps when

reſting under the word "*attention*" the heels are placed at an angle a little more acute than is deſired, upon which a broken board, or ſome other rough piece of wood is thurſt between the naked ancles, to wrench them aſunder; and not unfrequently, at the expence of a painful excoriation: thus the poor black is beſet on all quarters and at all points, and, whether ſtanding or moving, feels the weight of the cane, the fiſt, or ſome other weapon, upon either his head or his ſhoulders, his back, knees, ſhins, or naked toes.

Even the Indians, whoſe gravity ſeldom allows a ſmile to eſcape, have been diverted at the drilling of the black "awkward ſquad." A party, from the woods, came in one day at the gate, at the time the regiment was under arms, and, forgetting their uſual reſerve, expreſſed ſymptoms of amazement on ſeeing a body of negroes drawn up in a line, with firelocks in their hands, and clothed in uniform; but their attention was ſoon diverted from the great body of the battalion, by obſerving the *awkward ſquad*, whoſe blundering evolutions ſeemed to afford them more amuſement than any other occurrence we had witneſſed. Indeed it was the firſt time we had

been able to mark the expreſſion of ſurprize or curioſity upon the Indian countenance. The bucks pointed with their arrows to the unſeemly group making remarks to the buckeen, who, like the men, were ſo rouſed from their indifference as to ſmile, and ſeem much diverted.

The leſſons and converſations, comprehending ſcolding, encouraging, reaſoning, and commanding, uſed by the ſergeants and corporals to the heavy drones with whoſe improvement they are charged, are ſometimes highly amuſing, and often not without conſiderable intereſt, from tending to develope their characters, and the ſtate of their uncultivated faculties.

It happened lately that two of the Britiſh ſoldiers who were employed at the hoſpital, having been guilty of irregular conduct, were ordered into confinement; and, from it being near, they were taken to the guard-room of the rangers, where, upon recovering their ſober ſenſes, they felt extremely ſhocked at their degraded ſituation in being priſoners under the bayonet of negroes, whom they had perhaps cuffed about as ſlaves, or mere

beaſts of burden, and were quite indignant on recollecting that the very men who were now put over them, even ſince their arrival in the colony, had toiled all day in the field, goaded as horſes or oxen. The reflection may perhaps ſerve as an uſeful leſſon to them, and teach them to avoid ſimilar diſgrace in future; but I wiſh no unpleaſant jealouſies may ariſe among the different corps of ſoldiery. Poſſibly a ſtrict diſcipline, and the good conduct of the officers, may divert any invidious feelings that may be excited into a generous and laudable ſpirit of emulation, and make the varieties of colour and country ſubſervient to uſeful and honorable purpoſes: but it will require no inconſiderable addreſs to preſerve a perfect harmony among blacks and whites, Dutch, Engliſh, and Africans: Still the diſcordance alluded to is not all that is to be apprehended from training the ſlaves to arms. It is a meaſure which unqueſtionably provides a ſtrong defence for the preſent exigency—but it admits of a queſtion whether it may not be employing a temporary convenience to eſtabliſh what may be found a future evil. May it not teach the ſlaves a fact which will not readily be forgotten: may they not learn that they are not only

the moſt numerous, but, alſo, the ſtrongeſt party: in ſhort—may it not inſtruct them that they are men—and that a ſingle ſtep might enſure to them the rights of their common nature! Compared to ſlavery the reſtrictions of military diſcipline are as exquiſite freedom; and the negro who has once taſted it cannot be expected to return quietly to the yoke, and again expoſe his back to the whip.

Should the ſlaves once feel ſenſible of their power, the effect of this aſſurance will not be retarded by any religious or moral conſideration. Indeed, as my pen is led to this remark, it may not be inappropriate to follow it by a word upon the total neglect of religious obſervance, which prevails in theſe colonies. Knowing that the eſtabliſhed religion of the Dutch is Calviniſm, you will be much ſurprized to learn that all the ceremonies of the Sabbath have been utterly diſregarded. No church nor temple is to be found in the ſettlements, nor have the inhabitants even availed themſelves of the facilities of their religious rites ſo far as to appoint any houſe, or other building, for the performance of divine ſervice. Neglecting their own duties to

the Deity, they have uſed no means to inculcate a ſenſe of religious awe, or of moral conviction, among the ſlaves, but have confided the government of theſe poor degraded beings ſolely to terror, and the whip. Sunday, it is true, has been ſet apart as a day of reſt, but no ſolemn ceremony marks it as the Sabbath. Idleneſs and merriment only diſtinguiſh it from the other ſix days of the week. It is a holyday to the negroes, but no part of it is devoted to their moral or religious improvement: not one hour is appropriated to inſtruct them, in the duties we all owe to the Creator; or to teach them the principles which ought to govern the conduct of man towards man.

Since our arrival a laudable attempt has been made to remedy this unchriſtian-like neglect, but ſuch is the force of habit that, hitherto, the proſpect of ſucceſs cannot be conſidered as very auſpicious. A place has been appointed for the performance of the duties of the Sabbath, and after due notice being given of the time and place, the military chaplain attended to perform the ſervice: the governor likewiſe made his appearance; but after waiting for a conſiderable time, and finding that no further congregation aſſem-

bled, the governor and chaplain adjourned, and walked quietly home, poſtponing both prayers and ſermon to a future occaſion.

I feel myſelf ſuſpended between the fear of omitting ought which you would regret, and the apprehenſion of becoming weariſome to you upon an unpleaſant ſubject. Yet as the diſeaſe of this climate is matter of general anxiety, at the preſent moment, and creates peculiar intereſt, not only in our own iſland, but throughout the continents of Europe and America, I cannot reconcile to myſelf to paſs it over without noting to you, from time to time, the more prominent circumſtances which preſent themſelves to our obſervation regarding it.

The diminution of ſickneſs affording us ſufficient room for their accommodation, the ſick ſoldiers of the Dutch corps in our ſervice, and thoſe alſo of the South American Rangers are now received as patients into the hoſpital, together with our own troops. This arrangement will afford us an opportunity of witneſſing more preciſely the effect of diſeaſe, not ſimply upon the ſubjects of different countries, but upon thoſe who are recently arrived

from a colder climate; thoſe who from the reſidence of a few years are become in a certain degree acclimatés; and thoſe to whom the ſeaſons of this latitude are altogether congenial.

With each change of ſeaſon our deſperate foe ſeems to fight under a new face, and camelion-like, to aſſume a new ſkin. Very ſeldom do we now ſee the fever attended with that remarkable yellowneſs which it ſo commonly exhibited in the months of Auguſt and September. During the late dry ſeaſon it loſt its continued, and took on a remitting or intermitting form, and the intermitting type ſtill continues to be very frequent; but among the recent caſes, we have more now that are rapidly fatal than we had in the finer ſeaſon of October and the beginning of November: yet even theſe but rarely exhibit that yellowneſs of ſurface, which, although improperly, has been held ſo peculiarly characteriſtic as even to give a name to this deſtructive hydra.

Many of the ſick now fall into a ſtate of coma, and without exhibiting any other ſtriking mark of illneſs—without uttering a complaint or a groan, ſink very rapidly into the

arms of death. The countenance becomes pale; the ſkin aſſumes a clay or lead coloured hue; a ſtupor ſupervenes; the patient lies in a ſtate of tranquil inſenſibility; and without yellowneſs, or the other common marks of the fever, in the courſe of a few days he ſleeps to wáke no more! Sometimes, only a few hours complete the courſe of the diſeaſe, as in a late inſtance, where almoſt the only ſymptom was a profound coma, and the ſoldier died within the ſhort ſpace of twelve hours. Were this a ſolitary caſe I am aware how ſoon ſcepticiſm would convert it into a different diſeaſe; but without diſputing for a name, I need only remark that it is far from a rare inſtance, for, alas! we have too many examples in proof of it being a very common mode in which the fever now makes its attack. In others of the caſes which prove fatal, we find hiccough the predominant, and moſt diſtreſſing ſymptom: it continues in oppoſition to every remedy, and, in a few days, the patient is exhauſted..... and dies!

Neither public nor extenſive libraries were to be expected in theſe colonies; but had I much time for reading, I might ſadly lament this deficiency. After examining with

much care and attention all the late authors that I could collect, I think myſelf fortunate in meeting with the old and voluminous publication of Pere Labat, a Jeſuit, who, ſo long ſince as in the year 1701, wrote a tour through the Weſt India iſlands, in which he deſcribes very correctly the epidemic fever of theſe regions, and gives an accurate account of his own ſufferings under an attack of the diſeaſe; in the treatment of which he was twice blooded, venæſection being at that time uſed as a ſovereign remedy.

Amidſt our changes of ſeaſon, I ſhould be highly gratified could I report favorably of the improvement in our ſurgical wards; but of wounds and ulcers I have ſtill only gloomy tidings to offer: and it is remarkable that the diſtreſs occaſioned by theſe is wholly confined to the Europeans; for while the ſoldiers from England continue to ſuffer dreadfully from their ſores, the wounds of the Africans, who are lying in the adjoining beds of the ſame wards, heal with ſurprizing rapidity, and are completely cured. Indeed the recovery from ſores and ulcers in this climate is as peculiarly ſucceſsful among the blacks, as it is the reverſe among the Europeans, the

examples in proof of which are abundant: but not to tire you with tedious hiſtories of caſes I need only mention one, which has been recently related to me by a moſt reſpectable medical practitioner now in Demarara*; and by whom the treatment of the caſe was conducted. A negro, being detected in the act of robbing a plantain walk, was taken into confinement by the watchman, who, in the ſtruggle to ſecure him, wounded him very deſperately upon the head, neck, and ſhoulders with a cutlaſs: which, at one of the blows, paſſed through the bones of the ſcull and the membranes, into the ſubſtance of the brain. In the courſe of the cure, it happened that the dreſſings one day fell from this part, and, the flies gaining acceſs to the ſore, maggots were bred in great numbers within the brain. Theſe were removed by the profeſſional attendant, who in picking them out was employed for a conſiderable time at each of three ſucceſſive dreſſings: ſtill the negro rapidly recovered, and is now alive and well.

In conſequence of a garriſon ſurgeon having joined us, and the late ſevere duties of the hoſpital being leſſened, I am deprived of

* Dr. Monro.

the ſociety of my friendly comrade, the ſurgeon of the 99th regiment, whoſe zeal and ſervices have been ſo conſpicuous in the hoſpital department, from the time of our arrival in theſe ſettlements. The loſs of this gentleman is a great privation to me, and I ſhould feel it matter of high regret, were it not that I ſee better proſpects to himſelf in his abſence, than in his remaining here. He is gone to head quarters at Martinique, in the hope of obtaining a ſtaff appointment; or, in failure of that, to follow his regiment to England: but, as well on the ground of abilities and length of ſervice, as from his zeal and attention on duty, he has a claim to promotion, and ſeeing that our amiable commander in chief is always quick to diſcern merit, and never ſlow to reward it, I feel aſſured that the expectations of ſo deſerving an officer will not be diſappointed.

I have lately been much diverted with hearing the full detail of an intended publication, for which the author aſſures me he is buſily collecting materials. It is to be entitled the "Hiſtory of Guiana," and to be written by a perſon who has neither the advantage of education, nor of talents. You

will judge of the merits of the work, when you learn that it is in the author's plan to deſcribe *minutely* the ſources, and the junction of the rivers Oronoko and Amazons, without having travelled twenty miles from the ſea coaſt; and to give a full and *accurate* account of different races of people, not one of whom he has ever ſeen.

The diverſion afforded by the ludicrous account of this intended publication has been followed by ſuperior gratification in the peruſal of the ſimple journal of a private ſoldier, who lately died in the hoſpital. His notes and remarks though not highly edifying, are ſuch as might excite much intereſt in the boſom of reflection, for they exhibit a ſtriking example of the contemplations of a military man, and of the ſtate of the human mind among the lower orders of the ſoldiery; and are calculated to ſhow in a forcible manner how nearly happineſs is allied to contentment, and with how much facility the leading comforts of life may be ſecured, when our wants are bounded with diſcretion.

A fact has recently occurred to my knowledge, diſplaying a cuſtom which I am ſure

you will regard with aſtoniſhment.—It is uſual, in theſe colonies, for a perſon to take a negro, or more frequently a mulatto, or *meſtee* woman as houſe-keeper and companion of his bed-chamber; and, if he has children by her, and cannot afford, or does not chuſe to be at the expence of ſending them to Europe to be educated, he derives no diſhonor from breeding up the ſons as mechanics, and giving out the daughters in keeping to his friends; and ſo commonly is this cuſtom eſtabliſhed, that no feelings of remorſe ſeem to attach to it: on the contrary, it is deemed the beſt proviſion the parent can make for his daughter, to place her with a reſpectable man as his *bonne amie:* but it is neceſſary to underſtand that theſe are never whites, nor children born in wedlock—they are daughters of women of colour, who, like themſelves, have felt honored in being choſen the companions of their lords; and who do not aſpire to the dignified character of wife. Neither father nor daughter feel any ſenſe of ſhame, in yielding to this general uſage of the country—*her* ambition ſoars no higher, for ſhe is bred up with no other expectation—and the indelible diſgrace which would attach to marrying a woman of colour leaves

the parent no hope of providing for his daughter, by placing her in the more honorable ſtate of wedlock. Still the practice is ſo utterly repugnant to European ſentiments, that it muſt require a long reſidence in this country to reconcile it to the feelings of the father; for, whatever may be the diſtinction between wife and miſtreſs, it cannot be ſuppoſed that the feelings of nature in the breaſt of the parent can be thereby diminiſhed. The child is equally his offspring, and, from being leſs protected by the laws, is even in a greater degree the object of his care: it muſt therefore coſt him many a pang to ſubmit to this inſecure and perilous diſpoſal of his daughter. If the protector dies or leaves the country, the protegée returns to her father, until another ſuitor offers her his home.

You will be ſurprized to know that, until very lately, I have not had an opportunity of purchaſing a horſe, but you would be much more ſurprized could you ſee what a miſerable animal I have, at length, procured for the ſum of nearly forty guineas. Horſes are very ſcarce, and of high value upon this coaſt. No more are kept than are required for abſolute uſe, and a ſpare one is rarely to be met

with. They are moſtly imported from North America, and, like ourſelves, they are ſubject to a ſeaſoning diſeaſe, which equally cuts off man and horſe. The one I have purchaſed was lately brought from Barbadoes, where he has remained a conſiderable time ſince his arrival from North America, and I ſhall deem myſelf fortunate, if he ſhould have already withſtood a ſeaſoning in that iſland, which may protect him from further ſickneſs here.

We are again looking forward to dry and fine weather, for although the preſent wet ſeaſon has only been ſet in about a month, it is ſuppoſed, from the circumſtance of moſt of the rain now falling in the night, that it may be already declining. I forget whether I before remarked to you, that we have not, even in what is termed the rainy ſeaſon, any thick and foggy days like thoſe of an Engliſh November. The wet ſeaſon is a rapid alternation of dark cloud, with a clear atmoſphere, and bright ſun-ſhine. No foggy damps ſucceed the ruſhing torrents: the black cloud, from which they fall, pours forth its ſtreams, exhauſts itſelf, and paſſes away—leaving the obſcured rays of the ſun again free to reach the earth; and all is clear and bright between the heavy peltings of the ſtorm.

LETTER XVII.

Chriſtmas weather in Guiana. Feſtivities of the ſeaſon not neglected by the coloniſts. Obſerved by the blacks. Largeſs given to the ſlaves. Chriſtmas viſitings of the negroes. Chriſtmas excurſion of Captain Sturt and the author in a canoe. Orange ſeaſon. Plantains a moſt valuable food. Example of the ſad hardſhips of ſlavery. Caſe of intermittent fever in a planter. Remarkable event concerning a comrade's boots. Author's voyage from Mahaica to Stabroek. News of the Spaniſh war reaches Guiana—alſo of the pacific propoſals of Lord Malmſbury being rejected. Author's remarks reſpecting an inſecure and diſhonorable peace.

December 26th.

In tracing the date of this letter, I am reminded of the freezing ſeaſon under which you are ſhivering in England—and a ſenſe of cold chills me as I purſue the aſſociation: but you will be perſuaded that this is the mere effect of imagination, when I tell you, that the thermometer, at noon, is uſually about 83; and that, from uſing only moderate exerciſe, I am ſo ſtreamed with perſpiration as to make it neceſſary to change my clothes four or five times in the courſe of the day: even at this moment from only the ſlight ex-

ertion of writing, the drops fall ſo rapidly from the backs of my hands, as to ſpoil my paper, and I almoſt fear, to ſuch a degree, as to render my letter illegible.

On the ſubject of Chriſtmas, I ſhould tell you that it is not leſs a period of feſtivity, here, than in England. The planters make parties, and the merry feaſting of the ſeaſon goes round, unchilled with its froſty coldneſs. It is likewiſe a holyday to the ſlaves, who uſually receive ſome indulgence of food, and ſome preſent of clothing to augment the happineſs of the feſtival. We have ſeen new hats diſtributed among the men of a whole gang, and a bit of coarſe canvaſs for a petticoat given to each of the women, and never were children more delighted with new toys, than were theſe poor beings on the joyous occaſion of receiving theſe humble, but to them ſplendid offerings. Some freſh meat was alſo given to them as a high feaſt for dinner, and, in the evening, their loved African dance crowned the holyday. Parties of them go from the different plantations to ſpend the mirthful hours with their more particular friends or acquaintances of the neighbouring eſtates, and it is a happy meeting of relatives,

lovers, and fellow-paſſengers who have voyaged together from their native Africa. The whole country exhibits one moving ſcene of dancing gaiety. Merry crowds are met in every quarter, dreſſed out in all the gaudy trappings they can collect, and with their hair cut, and faſhioned into multitudes of whimſical ſhapes, repreſenting various figures of helmets, wigs, crowns and the like; and decorated with a profuſion of beads, bits of ribbon, and other tinſel ornaments.

But you will wiſh to know how your friend paſſed the Chriſtmas, and as it was in a way ſomewhat adventurous, it may not be altogether devoid of intereſt.—I was at Mahaica, and was invited to accompany captain Sturt, and other officers, to a plantation a few miles from the barracks, to eat my Chriſtmas dinner. Having no horſes, captain Sturt, who is quite a ſeaman and very fond of the water, offered to take me in a ſmall canoe, which he had procured from the Indians. We accordingly put to ſea in order to proceed down the coaſt, but we had ſcarcely eſcaped from the creek, before our little barque was toſſed about like an egg-ſhell upon the ſurface of the water. The ſea was rough; the wind con-

trary; and the breakers running frightfully high. Still the captain felt aſſured that we could make our paſſage. I very much doubted it, but as he was by far the beſt ſeaman I was unwilling to interrupt the excurſion by any ſcruples of my own. Two ſlaves had been placed in the centre of the canoe, with calabaſhes to bail out the water; and as the ends were conſiderably above the level of the ſea, even if the middle was filled, it was ſcarcely poſſible that the canoe could ſink, the great danger therefore conſiſted in the riſk of her being upſet. We fought about for ſome time, almoſt conſtantly tacking from ſide to ſide on account of the contrary wind. Full employment was found for our two negroes in bailing out the water which beat into the canoe, and we had a very complete waſhing from the daſhing of the waves and breakers. Finding that we made very little progreſs, and that the ſea grew ſtill rougher as we advanced, the captain was at length ſatisfied that it was in vain to perſevere, and we abandoned the expedition, by putting about and running over the heavy waves, directly before the wind, back into the creek from whence we had embarked. Horſes were not to be had, and the heat was too great to allow of our undertaking the journey

on foot, we therefore gave up all thoughts of joining the party, and contented ourſelves with eating roaſt beaf at the barracks, and drinking to our friends in Old England—anticipating a whole year in the delightful idea of paſſing the next Chriſtmas amongſt them in London.

I muſt not neglect to tell you that Chriſtmas is here the high ſeaſon for oranges. They are now ripe and in their greateſt perfection. You will be ſurpriſed to hear what quantities I am in the daily habit of conſuming. From ſix to twelve, pulled freſh from the tree, make my uſual allowance before breakfaſt, and I commonly take as many in the evening, beſides eating great numbers in the courſe of the day. Indeed fruit and vegetables form almoſt the whole of my diet, and I now ſuffer no diſtreſs on account of our ſcanty ſupply of animal proviſions. As was predicted to me, I am become ſo fond of plantains as ſcarcely to require any other food, and I am perſuaded that if they could be had in all climates, they would be found, without exception, the moſt valuable production of the earth. Roaſted, they ſerve as bread—fried, they are as meat and as fruit—

boiled, they are a ſubſtitute for potatoes, and beat into a paſte, they form excellent pudding. Like the ſlaves I now eat them morning, noon, and night. At breakfaſt they are my bread and butter—at dinner my meat and pudding—and at tea-time my only cake and toaſt.

A very diſtreſſing caſe has been related to us within theſe few days, expoſing the ſad hardſhips, and the ſhameful abuſe of power to which the people of colour are ſometimes ſubjected. A young man, a mulatto, under the agitation of extreme diſtreſs, preſented himſelf before the officers at Mahaica, complaining of the cruel ſeverities he had experienced from a Dutchman, holding an office of high truſt in the colony of Eſſequibo. Having been called upon buſineſs to Barbadoes, he had left a ſiſter at home, to whom he was very affectionately attached, and whom, during his abſence, this arbitrary magiſtrate took an opportunity of ſeducing; and from his not letting the ſubject paſs ſo tacitly as the Dutchman might have wiſhed, on his return, a feigned cauſe of complaint was preferred againſt him, and he was thrown into priſon, where he has been lying ever ſince, ſuffering the various hard-

ſhips and ſeverities dictated by this man of power; ſome of which could only be ſurpaſſed by the cruelty of an Eaſtern Tippoo. He at length effected his eſcape, and is now in concealment. His application to the commanding officer at Mahaica, was to implore him to intereſt the commandant of the colonies in his behalf; remarking that if he ſhould not ſucceed in obtaining ſome powerful interceſſion, his life muſt inevitably be ſacrificed; for, whenever he ſhould be diſcovered, a priſon would again be his lot, and he ſhould be made to ſuffer cruelties, or be left to languiſh under hardſhips that would ſoon deſtroy him.

On my way from Stabroek to Mahaica I lately ſlept at the houſe of a gentleman who related to me a very ſtriking caſe of intermittent fever, under which he had laboured for three quarters of a year, and which during the whole of that time had regularly returned at the periods of the ſpring tides. He commonly felt unwell on the third day previous to the full, and the change of the moon, and the fever was at the worſt on the day of the change, after which it decreaſed, and on the ſecond or third day of the decline of the

ſpring tides he was again well, and felt himſelf ſecure for the next fortnight. If he had any particular buſineſs to tranſact, or any important engagement to plan, he regularly conſulted the almanack in order ſo to arrange that they might not interfere with his periods of ſickneſs. He remarked that he could at any time interrupt the return of the fever, by taking a large quantity of Peruvian bark, but added, that he had ſuch an utter averſion to medicine, that rather than have recourſe to it, he ſhould have ſupported the diſeaſe ſtill longer, had it not begun to prey upon his conſtitution, by rendering him feeble during the periods of intermiſſion.

You know how eſſentially promotion in the army is ſaid to alleviate the grief ariſing from the loſs of a comrade; but you would be ſurprized to witneſs how lightly men on ſervice can treat the dangers which ſurround them, and how little they regard ſickneſs until it reaches themſelves, notwithſtanding that many of them would tremble more to go into an hoſpital than to face the enemy's cannon. It commonly happens, that a few days after the funeral, the clothes and baggage of a deceaſed officer are diſpoſed of by auction,

when, frequently, the jokes and witticiſms, which paſs among the purchaſers, betray the ſlight impreſſion made by the loſs that occaſioned the ſale. For inſtance, on a pair of boots being held up for a bidding, one officer ſaid to another, "You had better buy theſe boots, they will juſt ſuit you." "No" replied the other, looking down to his comrade's legs, "it is your turn next, and yours will fit me better: I ſhall have them in a few days." So it happened, and true enough, the boots then on the legs of his friend, ſoon—alas! too ſoon, were his!

You will believe that after ſuch a converſation, he could have no ſatisfaction in wearing them:—nor was ſuch the object of his making the purchaſe. He was actuated by a more amiable motive:—the boots are carefully preſerved in memory of his comrade, and of one of their lateſt meetings.

You will believe that the angry fates muſt ſurely have decreed me ill, whenever my perſon ſhall be expoſed to the mercy of the fickle god of the deep, when I tell you that on my late return from Mahaica, I embarked under the moſt favorable auſpices, aſſured of

making the paſſage to Stabroek within the ſpace of three hours, but as uſual, adverſe events rendered the voyage very tedious and diſtreſſing. Severe vomiting quickly ſeized me, and inſtead of being ſoon releaſed, I had the miſery of being detained a whole day and night on board a comfortleſs veſſel, without even the accommodation of a covering for my head. The cabin was crammed full with bales of cotton, which prevented all retreat from the ſun, as well as from the damp and rain of the night. The whole day paſſed in trouble and ſickneſs, and, in the evening, the only protection I had from the heavy torrents which deluged the veſſel, was to thruſt myſelf in between the cotton bags and the deck, lying upon my back with my face almoſt touching the boards, and my legs hanging out expoſed to the rain in the open hatchway.

In this diſtreſſing poſture, after the heat and ſickneſs of a moſt painfully tedious day, had I to paſs a ſtill more wearisome night; and, to augment the affliction, had the further annoyance of a high-favored Dutchman crowding into the ſame birth, and almoſt poiſoning me with fumes of gin, and other leſs grateful

odours. It will be granted that this was not a ſituation to be envied: yet how do the ills of life diminiſh upon a compariſon with the ſufferings of others! While I was complaining of my hard fate, in finding only partial protection from the weather, three poor Africans were lying ſhivering at my feet, in the open hatchway, expoſed quite naked to the rain.

We now learn that war is openly declared with Spain. It is likewiſe rumoured that the terms of peace offered by Lord Malmſbury have been rejected by the French, and that the conteſt is to be proſecuted with increaſed vigour. Direful as are the effects of this ſanguinary war, I truſt there is no Engliſhman, who would not rather bleed in the cauſe of his country, than ſee the honor and ſecurity of England trampled down by the maniacal rabble of revolutionary France. Peace is deſirable, but however ardently to be wiſhed for, the ſpirit of Engliſhmen will never allow them, tamely, to lay down their arms, and purchaſe the yoke of dependence, by compromiſing the ſecurity of their country. Delightful as it would be to me to return to my friends, and my native England, I would ra-

ther be long detained from them, amidſt all the perils of war and diſeaſe, than be recalled to witneſs any diſgraceful humiliation of our juſtly proud and happy iſland.

LETTER XVIII.

Author again viſits Mynheer Bercheych. Breakfaſt at the Hermitage. Some account of the great Ant-eater of Guiana. Ingenuity of the Mocking bird regarding the ſtructure and ſituation of its neſt. Opinion of Buffon:—of Darwin. The neſts of ants—uſed as food for chickens. Mynheer Bercheych viſits the officers at Mahaica. Takes dinner with them in preſence of a party of Indians. Another party of Indians come down to the barracks. Unſucceſsful attempts made by the officers to animate or amuſe them.

Demarara, Dec.

I HAVE lately had an oportunity of repeating my viſit to the eccentric Bercheych. Having ſlept on my way at Mr. Graham's, I rode from thence in the morning to take my breakfaſt tête-à-tête, with this ſolitary yet ſocial and intelligent recluſe. Although unexpected, he inſtantly addreſſed me by name, and received me in the moſt friendly manner, telling me that he was mindful of his promiſe, and that ſome Indians were at work upon the model of houſe and furniture, which he had offered to procure for me.

A moſt ample breakfaſt was quickly ſet before us, ſerved with great neatneſs and order, and conſiſting of broiled chicken, ſalt-fiſh, eggs, plantains, bread, caſſada, and wine and water. I was delighted, as before, with his converſation and remarks, and was particularly gratified with the account he gave me of that ſingular animal the great Ant-eater, which he had had frequent opportunities of ſeeing both dead and alive, his people having ſhot ſeveral of them. The weight of this peculiar animal is commonly from 150lb. to 200lb. He has a very ſmall head, covered with hair as ſoft as velvet; his tail is immenſely large, flat, and covered with long hair, which is even ſtronger than the briſtles of a hog. His feet are armed with long claws, forming very ſtrong offenſive weapons. By means of his claws, and his tail, he is able to defend himſelf againſt even the tiger; and in ſome inſtances has been known to conquer that fierce and powerful animal. When attacked, he fights with his ſtrong claws, defending his head by wrapping it up in his broad tail of briſtles, which the tiger cannot penetrate. He has a tongue of very uncommon length, which is moiſtened with ſaliva of a ſweetiſh flavour.

As the name implies, ants are his food, and his mode of procuring it is by thruſting his deceitful tongue into a neſt of theſe inſects, when, allured by the ſweetneſs of the ſaliva, they ſettle upon it in great numbers, and the animal, by drawing it in, ſwallows up whole hoſts of them at once. The high reliſh, no doubt, excites an increaſed ſecretion, and with his tongue again ſweetly baited, he entraps new victims — repeating the ſlaughter until his appetite is ſatiated with the myriads of ſlain.

You will not deem it mal-à-propos if I follow this account of the peculiarites of one of the animals of Guiana, with a ſtatement of what I have lately obſerved reſpecting the habits of a bird, and an inſect of this country.

Walking with one of the gentlemen of the hoſpital department, down to the bottom of a coffee eſtate which leads into the wild woods; our attention was arreſted by the ſingular appearance of numbers of the trees at the entrance of the foreſt; many of which had penſile bodies, like common cabbage-nets

ſtuffed with ſtraw, hanging from the extremities of their lofty branches; and others, huge black maſſes, conveying the idea of large animals, adhering to their trunks. Upon approaching nearer to them we diſcovered that the former were the neſts of birds; the latter —of ants!

The bird-neſts were the fabrication of a ſpecies here termed the mocking-bird, but unlike that of imitative note ſo named in the Northern States of this continent. Both the conſtruction and ſituation of theſe neſts are peculiarly ingenious. They are not built upon, nor within any part of the tree, but are faſtened to the outermoſt twigs of the remoteſt branches, as if tied to them with ſtrings; and it is extremely difficult to imagine how, in this ſuſpended and penſile form, the building of them can be effected; for their appearance would ſuggeſt the idea that they muſt have been firſt conſtructed, then carried up whole, and hung upon the twigs which ſupport them. They are deep and cylindrical like long nets or purſes, from which figure, together with the ready flexibility of the tender branches that bear

them, they are in no danger of being overturned by the breeze, nor of having their eggs, or young, toſſed out by ſudden guſts of wind. The appearance of them, as they hang waving in the breeze, is very remarkable, and ſome of the trees are ſo thickly beſet with them that, at a ſhort diſtance, it is difficult to diſtinguiſh which are moſt numerous, theſe neſts or the leaves. The ſituation of them is admirably choſen for the purpoſe of protection againſt the various ſpecies of monkies, which infeſt the woods—none of theſe marauders being able to ſupport themſelves upon the ſlender twigs from which the neſts are ſuſpended. Buffon would tell us that an unerring inſtinct had taught theſe birds thus to protect their eggs, and their young:—Darwin would attribute it to reaſon and experience. But the fact of the younger birds ſelecting the ſame ſituation, and conſtructing their neſts, even the firſt ſeaſon, with as great perfection as their parents, would ſeem to offer an inſurmountable objection to the opinion which refers it to a reaſoning faculty. Nothing of regular advancement,—nothing of progreſſive improvement is diſplayed, all is perfection from the beginning, and experience begets no

ſuperiority; for it is not ſeen that either age or repetition afford the uſual advantages of improved intellect—the youngeſt bird being equally ingenious, and equally perfect in his architecture as the oldeſt.

The ant-neſts are immenſe maſſes of black earth, built upon the trunks of the trees; many of them ſo high, and of ſuch extraordinary bulk, as to render it matter of ſurprize, how even the combined induſtry of ſuch minute inſects could have carried up, and worked together ſuch prodigious accumulations. One of theſe neſts very much reſembled a large black bear clinging round the tree; nor was it till we came near enough to examine it cloſely that we could believe it to be the maſonry—the dwelling-houſe and caſtle of theſe diminutive artiſts.

I thruſt the end of my cane into ſeveral of the neſts, breaking through the outer walls of the manſions; when inſtantly whole hoſts of ants iſſued forth from the openings. Upon breaking down a part of one of theſe buildings to examine it more minutely, I found that although the exterior ſurface was ſmooth

and uniform, the interior was conſtructed into cells ſomewhat of a regular figure, and very much reſembling the honey-comb of bees.

We find that theſe neſts are converted to an uſeful purpoſe—being given as food to young chickens. Frequently the trees, upon which they are built, are cut down for the ſole purpoſe of obtaining them. The mode of uſing them is by breaking off a portion of the cellular earth, from the great maſs, and ſticking it upon a pole, or otherwiſe placing it over the lattice-work of the pen in which the hen and her brood are confined, in order that the young of the ants may fall out of their cells to the ground; where they are, inſtantly, devoured by the chickens.

On the day after my breakfaſt viſit at the cottage, hermit Bercheych, as he is often called, came, in great ſtate, to dine with us at the barracks. He was paddled down the creek in his large canoe, by ſix fine ſlaves, and it was pleaſing to obſerve what profound attention and reſpect were borne this old gentman by his negroes, who comported them-

ſelves with a degree of regularity and decorum worthy the beſt ordered domeſtics of Europe.

Our party was ſmall, and we ſat down to dinner in the preſence of a group of naked Indians, who that day made us a viſit from the woods. It was not in our power, even with our beſt attentions, to make a ſufficient return for the many marks of hoſpitality we had met with at the hermitage, but our gueſt expreſſed himſelf happy, and was lively and entertaining as ever. The few hours we had of his ſociety paſſed very pleaſantly, and we regretted extremely that the tide, and the approach of evening took him from us early after dinner.

Abſorbed with the attentions due to the accompliſhed and methodic Bercheych, we were leſs regardful of our ſtrangers from the woods than was uſual; but we have lately been viſited by another party of the bucks, to whom we earneſtly devoted our attentions, during the ſhort time they remained among us. We made it a ſettled experiment to endeavour to rouſe them from that fixed apathy and indifference which form ſo ſtriking

a feature of their character. By ſigns we attempted to lead them into a ſort of converſation. We gave them rum to drink,—brought out bows and arrows to ſhoot with—played the German flute to them—beat the drum, and piped the fife—but all in vain! Nothing of mirth or vivacity was excited. Rum poſſeſſed the only charm: of this both the men and women drank glaſs after glaſs as faſt as it was given them.

Cynics have ſaid that the gift of ſpeech is a bleſſing ſeldom denied to the ladies—but we remarked that theſe naked wood-nymphs were peculiarly taciturn. They ſeemed even more tranquil and incurious than the men. They ſat two upon a chair, the whole time, with their backs towards us, and were not inſpired by any thing that occurred to move a ſingle feature or a muſcle—nor were the men much more animated: one of them, who appeared to be very old, had in his hand a piece of a large and coarſe reed, nearly two feet long, with two or three holes cut in it like a flute. With this we did prevail upon him to blow a few very harſh and ſimple notes, and theſe he ſeemed to conſider very

ſuperior to all the varied ſounds of the German flute, which was played to him by one of the officers; for, although he had ſeemed to liſten to it with ſome attention, he refuſed to accept the flute in exchange for his reed. After trying various other means to rouſe them into animation, we cauſed the drum and fife to be played, unexpectedly, below the window, where they were ſitting. This ſeemed to ſtrike the ear, and they for a moment appeared to liſten, but nothing of impulſe was betrayed—nothing of vivacity overſpread their features—nor did an individual of them ſo far forget his gravity as to riſe from his ſeat to look out at the window.

LETTER XIX.

Author addreſſes his friend on returning from the burial of a comrade. Fate of medical aſſiſtants. Rapid deſtruction from fever. The ſtrongeſt health no ſecurity. Afflicting impreſſion of the funeral. Remarks upon its mixed influence. The funeral proceſſion diſpenſed with in the Britiſh corps. Continued by the Dutch. Remarks on the Hollanders' devotion to cuſtom. They ſound the dead march at the door of the hoſpital. Author applies to have this ceremony ſuſpended. Extract of a letter from an officer to his friend concerning the author's illneſs. Unfiniſhed letter from the author's late aſſiſtant to his father. Report of his death diſcredited, on account of his being ſeen in health only a ſhort time before. Quiet change of the year. News received of the capture of Admiral Lucas's fleet by Sir Keith Elphinſtone. Rumour of hoſtilities between America and France. Freſh proviſions obtained for the hoſpital. Their effect upon the ſick.

La Bourgade, Jan. 8th.

You will comprehend the ſentiment which aſſociates your image with the ſadneſs of the preſent hour. It is one of thoſe periods when the ſickened mind turns from all common objects, and clings to the remembrance of thoſe we hold moſt dear. Having juſt returned from the funeral of one of my com-

rades, who died in the adjoining chamber this morning, and whoſe remains I have this evening followed to the grave, I find that the heavy depreſſion of the occaſion admits of no relief from the immediate circumſtances around me, therefore I take up my pen to ſeek alleviation in an appeal to the boſom of friendſhip and of ſympathy. I had before experienced the impreſſive ſolemnity of a military funeral, but the awful gloom, connecting with the proceſſion, had not weighed upon me with all the affliction of the preſent moment. Of ſix gentlemen who accompanied me from Barbadoes, as aſſiſtants in the hoſpital department, three had died, one was ſent to England with invalids, and the other two had, for ſome time paſt, reſided in the ſame houſe with myſelf. Early this morning I was called from my bed to viſit one of theſe, who had been a very ſhort time ill, and was taken worſe in the night. You will believe that I quickly obeyed the ſummons: but although I loſt no time in putting on my clothes, and haſtening to his room, on reaching his bed-ſide I found him a lifeleſs corpſe! The caſe of this young man ſhews the very perilous ſituation of Europeans in this climate, and proves with

how much truth it may be ſaid that to-day we are well—to-morrow in fever, and—next day in the grave! Nor do health and vigour give any ſecurity; for he who to-day boaſts the greateſt ſtrength, to-morrow, perhaps, is extended in his coffin. I need not tell you that this melancholy ſcene has ſpread a gloomy ſadneſs among us: each perſon on viewing his friend, or reflecting into his own boſom, feels conſcious that in only a few ſhort hours the ſame relentleſs deſtroyer may ſubject him to a ſimilar fate; and accordingly, each, in ſilence, ſeems to regard the other as a friend to whom he is about to bid an eternal adieu. The influence of ſuch an impreſſion could not be wholly reſiſted, and a ſenſe of deep ſorrow and anxiety at this moment clouds every brow.

Moſt of the officers of the garriſon attended the funeral, and, when following the corpſe in ſlow and doleful proceſſion, with the band playing the dead march, and the minute-drum beating in hollow ſound, the agonized feelings of the occaſion became ſtill more poignant from the conviction that, perhaps, before another day had paſſed, others of us might be

extended at the ſide of the comrade, whoſe loſs we now deplored.

The ſlow muſic, and the ſolemn parade with which a military funeral is accompanied, may be ſaid to render it moſt ſublimely diſtreſſing, for while the afflicted mind ſinks as it were into the very grave, it ſeems tranſported beyond all ſublunary influence. Indeed the mixed and vivid ſenſations of ſuch a moment can neither be deſcribed nor comprehended—they muſt be felt to be underſtood, for the ſoul ſeems to be, at the ſame time, plunged into the profoundeſt depths of miſery, and to thrill with all the harmonic joys of heaven.

I have before remarked to you, that from the ſtrong tendency of ſuch awful ceremonies to ſpread gloomy apprehenſions among the living, it were deſirable that the parade of military funerals ſhould be diſpenſed with, in a climate where the troops may, at all moments, be under feelings of alarm from the peril of diſeaſe; yet may it be a queſtion, with ſome, in how far it were politic to deprive the ſoldier of this laſt and honorable mark of

diſtinction, the ſentiment attaching to which is, no doubt, one among the many cauſes which inſpire to brave and noble conduct.

Among the ſoldiers of our own battalions, its diſuſe has been found both wiſe and neceſſary, for were it to be employed on all occaſions, in theſe climates, it might, not only, too often call thoſe in health to the performance of a diſtreſsful duty, but it would alſo become a ſadly frequent memento to the ſick, by reminding them that a comrade was journeying, whither it might ſoon be their fate to follow him—the effect of which, added to the common apprehenſion with reſpect to diſeaſe, might produce a degree of depreſſion, which no means could remedy. Yet among the formal Dutch the practice, is continued; for, perhaps, it were eaſier to overturn the Alps, than to do away the prejudices of the Hollanders, whole inflexible attachment to cuſtom, and to ceremony, reigns paramount in all their proceedings. Queſtions of expediency yield to queſtions of uſage, and it muſt be proved to be a glaring injury, indeed, to the living, before a Dutchman could conſent to forego an eſtabliſhed obſervance to the dead.

A few days ago, a Dutch ſoldier having died in the hoſpital, due notice was ſent to the ſerjeant of his company, in the expectation that the body would be quietly removed, and the funeral conducted without diſturbing the ſick; but ſoon afterwards we were ſurpriſed by hearing the dead march ſounding at the very door of the hoſpital: and, on haſtening thither to ſtop the muſic, until it ſhould be out of the hearing of the ſick, and the dying, I found the band and a regular firing party aſſembled, in due form, to conduct the corpſe with all the ceremony of military honors to the grave.

As a mark of reſpect to their deceaſed comrade, it pleaſed me, yet, conſiſtent with my duty to the ſick, I was compelled to interrupt the proceeding, and finding in this inſtance, that I had to contend with invincible prejudice, I wrote to the Dutch commander to requeſt, that on future occaſions, if it was deemed requiſite, to perſiſt in the ceremony, directions might be given for the muſic to meet the proceſſion, at ſome diſtance upon the road, where it could not be heard by thoſe who were lying in the hoſpital.

Notwithſtanding the deep affliction of the preſent hour, many as I mentioned to you before, even amidſt all the dangers of climate and of war, think very lightly of ſickneſs until it reaches themſelves. In further proof of which I may give you an extract from a letter, written by an officer to my poor loſt aſſiſtant, at the time I was ill with yellow fever, and now found among his effects—"I am ſorry" writes the officer "to hear of Dr. Pinckard's dangerous ſtate, but I ſhall the leſs regret his loſs if it gives a ſtep to my friend" —or in other words "*let him be releaſed*, and I promiſe not to grieve ſo *my friend gains promotion!*"—Poor fellow! my death could have cauſed as little promotion to him, as his now gives to me!

It is remarkable, that among his papers we alſo find an unfiniſhed letter, begun only a day or two ago, to his father, in which he ſpeaks of being uncommonly well, and gratefully offers thanks to the Deity for the bleſſing of ſuch excellent health.

Soon after he expired, a man called who had ſome buſineſs with him, and on being

told that he was dead, he would not leave the houſe, but inſiſted that we were deceiving him, ſaying that he had ſeen him in the town *perfectly well* " only a day or two before !"

But to eſcape from this painful theme, let me tell you that before our unhappy loſs we had hailed the new year in propitious greetings. It had opened upon us unmarked with any peculiar feature : without being drowned in mirth, the un-plumed deputy of the grim ſcythe-bearer retired in ſilent tranquillity; while equal modeſty marked the birth of his new-winged ſucceſſor. No loud adieux, nor feſtive joys proclaimed the period. It paſſed in ſoft repoſe, and I remained unconſcious of the change, until the youthful meſſenger of the hoary monitor gently flew in at my chamber window, and whiſpered me to my daily round of duty.

We have been ſome time without news from your ſide the Atlantic ; but a ſingle paper is now brought to us by the captain of a ſhip from Glaſgow, and you will not be ſurprized to learn that it is worn to ſhreds, (by paſſing through the hands of the whole gar-

riſon,) when I tell you that it contains the firſt intimation we have received of an entire Dutch fleet, commanded by Admiral Lucas, being captured by the brave Sir Keith Elphinſtone at the Cape of Good Hope. At this news we feel that our hearts beat in uniſon with all yours at home, for it is in ſuch victories that we may look for peace, and, what is even of greater conſequence, for ſecurity againſt a ſpeedy renewal of the war.

By the ſame paper we alſo learn, that public rumour ſpeaks of hoſtilities between America and France, in conſequence of the piratical conduct of the latter, towards the American ſhips and commerce. Thus while we read of one circumance that might tend to a peace, we find others which threaten to ſpread far wider the ſad ravages of war.

After being for ſome time without freſh animal proviſions, it has happened that the hoſpital has been ſupplied with them ſeveral times within the laſt few days: but, unhappily, the effect they have produced upon the bowels of the ſick, has more than counteracted the benefit which they might have derived from them.

Aware that this was not an unfrequent occurrence, we had endeavored to guard againſt it by iſſuing the freſh meat only in ſmall portions at a time, yet, from their ſtomachs having been ſo long unaccuſtomed to it, and from the debilitated ſtate of the patients, the laxative effect was very conſiderable, nearly the whole of the convaleſcents having been attacked with a troubleſome Diarrhæa.

LETTER XX.

Coincidence of fever and the ſpring tides. Caſe of Mr. Beete. Birth-day review. Tardy march of the Dutch troops to the field. Birth-day dinner. Ball at the Fort. Exceſſive fatigue ſupported by the ladies in dancing. Delicate ſupper ſwallowed by a Dutch lady. Improved health of the troops. Weekly return without a caſualty.

Demarara, Jan. 21.

We have again had abundant occaſion to remark the fact regarding the coincidence between the returns of fever in this climate, and the periods of the ſpring tides. Only a few days ago, at the time of full moon, Mr. Beete (the commiſſary) Mr. Mulheran (one of our aſſiſtants in the medical department) and ſix of the convaleſcents in the hoſpital were attacked with a relapſe of fever, or what is here called "the tides"—three were caſes of continued fever—five of intermittent: but it is not in the paroxyſms of intermittent, and the relapſes of fever, only, that the diſeaſe appears to be influenced by the recurrence of the ſpring tides, for we now find that the primary invaſion of the diſorder is more fre-

quent, and the number of fever-patients admitted into the hoſpital greater, at theſe periods, than at any other time.

The caſe of Mr. Beete is peculiar; and places the fact in a very ſtriking light. He has been long reſident in the Weſt Indies, and from having withſtood all the late perils of diſeaſe at Grenada, might be regarded as, in a great degree, ſecure againſt that particular form of the fever which is ſo fatal to newly arrived Europeans: but, very ſoon after he came from the iſlands to Demarara, he was attacked with it, in the form which it more commonly aſſumes among the creoles, and thoſe who have been long on this ſhore of the Atlantic, viz. as an intermittent, yet not returning as a quotidian, a tertian, or a quartan, but as a quindeciman, and ſo regularly obſerving its type that, if referred to its place in a ſyſtem of noſology, it might juſtly be ranked among the ſpecies of intermittent fever, under the title of quindecimana. It has continued ever ſince, returning at intervals of a fortnight, with the exacerbations correctly obeying the periods of new and full moon, but he has always the power of interrupting it, and

averting the paroxyſm by a copious uſe of the bark for only a day or two previous to the time of ſpring tide, and his friends very earneſtly hope that he will ſoon, ſo far ſubdue his averſion to the taking of medicine, as to employ it in ſufficient quantity wholly to eradicate the diſeaſe. In the four other caſes of intermittent, the fever aſſumes the ordinary quotidian, or the tertian type. In the caſes wherein the diſorder appears in its continued form, the relapſes are, frequently, not leſs ſevere than the original attack.

The 18th inſtant, being the Queen's birth-day, we honored it in public and private rejoicing, and as our days of feſtival are few, you will believe that due juſtice was done to the occaſion. In the morning we had a general review of the troops; afterwards a large party dined, and drank her Majeſty's health with the commandant: and, in the evening, the officers gave a ſplendid ball at the fort.

The review afforded great ſatisfaction to the inhabitants, by placing before them a fine body of troops, armed in the defence of the

colony. They were of different nations, different colours, and different uniform; yet from the excellent diſcipline inſtilled among them by the unwearied attentions of the commandant and the officers, their appearance in the field was highly military, and their manœuvres executed with much of order and correctneſs. The line, if not formidable, was very reſpectable. On the right were the Britiſh troops, and the corps of Demarara volunteers, in ſcarlet uniform: on the left were the Dutch, in blue: in the centre the fine battalion of South American rangers, in white: and, on each wing a party of the royal artillery.

In going to the field either the Hollanders had neglected their uſual punctuality, or all the others had aſſembled before the appointed hour; for the Dutch corps did not arrive until long after theſe had taken their ground; a circumſtance which was rendered more remarkable, on account of theſe formal beings continuing their march in ſlow ſtep, even after they appeared in ſight, and perceived that the commandant with all the officers, and the troops, were in the field waiting for them. You will not wonder that upon ſeeing them

the impatient crowd exclaimed "a funeral! "a funeral!" for, in verity their movement had far more the air of a funeral proceſſion, than a march to a review: but it is their cuſtom to proceed to the field, on ſuch occaſions, in ſlow time; and cuſtom, among the Dutch, would ſeem to be as ſacred as the Perſian laws.

At the dinner, the board was enriched with all the dainties of the country, and the appetite provoked by choice wines and cheering muſic. The governor, the fiſcal, moſt of the officers, and many of the principal inhabitants of the colony, were preſent. A military band enlivened the banquet, and merry toaſts and ſongs cauſed the bumper glaſs to move in much quicker time, than the Dutchmen had marched to the review. I left the table early, in order to make my round of duty at the hoſpital, and joined the party again in the evening at the ball, where, in a group of about ſeventy perſons, we met all the beauty and faſhion of the colony. The occurrences beſt worth noting to you were—the ſurpriſing exertion ſupported by the ladies in dancing—

and the aſtoniſhing ſupper-appetites betrayed by ſome of the Dutch females. In the whole party, the number of ladies did not exceed ſixteen, ſo that many of the gentlemen, in the early part of the evening, had to lament the want of partners in the dance; yet ſuch was the proweſs of the fair, that, before the dancing ceaſed, each had ſubdued her triple round of beaux; and it fell to their lot to complain of the want of partners. The exerciſe uſed by the ladies was truly aſtoniſhing, and far exceeded all that I could have believed them capable of ſupporting; but, call it pleaſure, and the body is ſtrong. If ſuch exceſs had been recommended, as neceſſary for any other purpoſe, it would no doubt have been regarded as dangerous and deſtructive fatigue. Some of them, with only the interval of ſupper-time, danced country dances, and cotillions, from nine o'clock in the evening, until day-light in the morning; in a room where, probably, the heat was above 90 degrees. Knowing this, you will not be ſurprized that, although early in the evening, the beaux had to contend for belles—late in the morning the belles had to ſeek for beaux.

At ſupper, few as the ladies were, it happened to be my fortune to be placed between two of them: but of one only I have now to ſpeak; yet let me firſt remark that the whole colony was ranſacked to furniſh the table; which was moſt ſumptuouſly and profuſely ſpread. On my noticing the uncommon crowd of diſhes, an officer dryly replied—"perhaps you are not aware that the party to "be entertained is Dutch."—I thought it fully ſufficient for five ſuch parties, whether Dutch, Engliſh, or French; but if all had eaten like the lady in queſtion, I muſt have been very egregiouſly deceived. Many others alſo enjoyed the feaſt moſt abundantly, and their capacious appetites excited alternate ſenſations of diverſion and ſurprize—not to ſay—diſguſt!

The lady at my right elbow, was very large, and of true Dutch figure. Her perſon may be well deſcribed in two words—broad and bulky! By ſome accident ſhe had ſprained her wriſt, and this formed a ready apology for appealing to my particular attention, which, from not being in the habit of eating ſupper, I could the better devote to her ſervice: but I almoſt fear to note to you the fact I have to

relate, leſt you ſhould imagine that I aſſume a traveller's privilege, and indulge in the marvellous at the expence of a fair aſſociate gueſt. Let me therefore premiſe, that in what follows, the boundaries of ſober truth are not out-ſtepped one ſingle iota; for I not only helped the lady to her meats, and poured forth her wines, but was further called upon to cut her food, into ſmall pieces, ready for the fork, by which I had the opportunity of obſerving literally *every mouthful*.

Scarcely had we taken our ſeats, before my fair neighbour requeſted me to help her to a glaſs of claret, of which I found a *full* bottle ſtanding *between* us. The ceremony of a gentleman drinking at the ſame time was not deemed eſſential; I therefore taſted but very lightly: yet it ſomehow happened, and without the bottle being once removed, that, before the ſupper was at end, the gentle lady was compelled to have recourſe to a ſound glaſs or two of Madeira, to ſupply the deficiencies of our *empty* bottle! With this, her eating was in no degree at variance, for ſhe commenced by forming a ſolid ſtratum of two heavy ſlices of fat ham, after which I

helped her from no leſs than *fourteen* other diſhes, of each of which, to my ſurpriſe, ſhe partook with ſeeming appetite! Such a ſupper I had not before ſeen ſwallowed by man, woman, or any thing in human ſhape! And though ſatiated, not ſatisfied, ſhe afterwards deſired me to reach towards her ſeveral of the diſhes of fruit, from each of which, after liberally taſting, ſhe *privately* gave a portion to a female ſlave, who was ſtanding at her back; and when ſhe roſe to leave the ſupper room, I obſerved *under her chair* a loaded plate of fruits and ſweets, which, without doubt, the negreſs had received inſtructions to convey home to regale her miſtreſs on the morrow. This, by the by, is a cuſtom, which I have more than once ſeen practiſed by foreign ladies, both Dutch and French!

But what will ſurpriſe you moſt is, to know that after this *light ſupper*, my lady of Turkey ſtomach *briſkly* reſumed the merry dance! and, when I retired at five o'clock in the morning, ſhe remained tripping it away as light as..... Batavian clay!

It affords me real pleaſure to be able to remark that we have entered the more cordially into the late feſtivity on account of the improved ſtate of our ſick liſt, and from the happy circumſtance of the laſt weekly return of the hoſpital not containing even a ſingle caſualty. This is a ſubject of great and peculiar ſatisfaction to the medical officers; it being the firſt week ſince our arrival in theſe colonies, that we have had the opportunity of making out a weekly return, without marking ſome one in the fatal column. But the healthy ſeaſon is now ſetting in, and we are taught to expect nearly four months of dry weather, with a ſalubrious breeze, which is to waft away all our maladies. I have been too much in the habit of buſy employment to feel any deſire to ſit down in idleneſs; yet, upon ſuch terms, I could be very happy to remain..... without duty.

LETTER XX.

Attack of the Spaniards from Oronoko. Repulſed from the poſt of Moroko by the Dutch troops in the Britiſh ſervice. The news brought to head quarters by Indian couriers. Converſation with ſome ſlaves on the ſubject of freedom. Replies of a negreſs. Remarks of an intelligent negro. The yellow fever attacks the ſame perſon various times. A bull made by one of the author's aſſiſtants. Example of yellowneſs of the body from heat without fever. Creoles greater invalids than Europeans. Contending influence of an elegant poet, and the god of arms.

Demarara, Feb. 11.

A conſiderable time has now paſſed ſince our arrival upon this coaſt, and, having remained ſo long without any interruption, we had almoſt believed that the many foes upon our borders meant to leave us in quiet poſſeſſion of the colonies we had taken; but we have, at length, been aſſailed from the quarter, whence we leaſt expected it, having had a ſkirmiſh with the Spaniards to leeward, inſtead of

the Dutch or French, who in more impoſing aſpect, threatened us from windward. Fixing upon a favorable moment when they expected that the garriſon might be ſunk in repoſe, after the feſtivities of the Queen's birth-day, a party of Spaniards croſſed the river Oronoko in the night of the 19th. inſt. and made an attack upon our out-poſt at Moroko, the remoteſt point of the colony of Eſſequibo. To their diſappointment our troops were upon the alert, and they were obſerved before they landed. Quickly the whole force at the poſt was under arms, and at ſtepping on ſhore the Dons met a very warm and lively reception. The firing was returned on the part of the Spaniards, who boldly ruſhed forward, expecting to ſubdue the garriſon, but, after the conteſt had continued a ſhort time, they were defeated, and, ſome being killed, ſome wounded, and others driven into the river, thoſe who were able to make their eſcape, precipitately took to their boats and retreated. Happily not one of our men was killed, but the commanding officer and nine of the ſoldiers were wounded, ſome of the latter, we fear, mortally. This is the firſt rencontre we have had with the enemy ſince our

arrival in Guiana; and from the reſult it is probable that the next aſſault will not be from the quarter of the Oronoko.

Very much to their honor, this gallant defence of our out-poſt, was made by Captain Rochelle and a party of the Dutch troops, who had ſurrendered on our taking the colonies, and afterwards entered into the ſervice of his Majeſty. They fought with great bravery, and gave a ſatisfactory proof that they merited the confidence repoſed in them, in appointing them to the defence of this important ſtation.

Two of the Bucks, or Indians, were diſpatched from the poſt, to bring us the news of the action, and they, with the zeal and punctuality of more regular couriers, reached Stabroek on the 23d. four days after the battle. According to my cuſtom, I engaged theſe men of the woods, each evening during their ſtay, to join me in my favorite exerciſe of ſhooting with the bow and arrow.

I have lately amuſed myſelf by taking frequent opportunities of engaging in con-

verſation with different negroes, both men and women, with the view of aſcertaining what was the ſtate of their intellects, and particularly what were their ſentiments with regard to the ſubject of freedom and ſlavery; and when I tell you that I was careful to ſelect thoſe who were the moſt intelligent, you will be ſurprized to learn the very limited extent of their knowledge. Their utmoſt ambition does not go beyond the procuring of food, with the little clothing they wear, and medicine when ſick; nor in any other view do they ſeem to comprehend the advantages of freedom; and, being aſſured of theſe from their maſters, while they remain ſlaves, they have a ſenſe of terror at the idea of being made free: yet I have remarked that ſome of the women ſpeak in raptures on the ſubject of obtaining their liberty; but, upon further queſtioning them, I have always diſcovered that it was not from any juſt ſenſe of independence; but from the mere deſire of becoming the ſultana of a white man, and being placed by him above the ordinary ſlaves of his houſe.

I give you the following converſation, literally as it paſſed; from which you will be able to form a more correct judgment of the ſentiments which dictated the replies.

Would you not like to go to England?

No! Backra country no good! In Neger country they no flog 'em, and dat better dan Backra country.

Should you not wiſh to be free?

O yes! O yes!

And if you were free, where would you live, and what would you do?

Live wid dem dat buy me free.

Well! and would you not go with them to England?

No! me 'fraid to go where 'em all Backra. Me love for ſee Neger here and dere; me 'fraid for ſee all Backra.

But if thoſe, who bought you free, ſhould go away and leave you?

Den me live wid one Backra man, and hab one ſlave for work for me.

And if this Backra man ſhould die?

Den me live wid one other Backra man.

This was the utmoſt extent of all ſhe deſired on earth. She would remain with any family that ſhould make her free, but if they ſhould leave the colony, ſhe would go and live with a white man, and prevail upon him to buy her a ſlave; and if this protector ſhould die, then ſhe would ſeek for another white man, and go and live with him; and ſo on, from one white man to another, as often as they ſhould die, or leave the colony. It was a very common reply from many of them to the queſtion,—What would you do were you free?—Live wid de Backra man dat buy me free, waſh him linen, and keep him clean!

Another very frequent anſwer, both from the men and women, to the queſtion, —Would you not like to be free? was—

If me free—who gib me food—who gib me clothes—who ſend me a doctor when me ſick!

Among thoſe who condemned freedom was a very fine negro, who was born in the colony; and who ſpeaks better Engliſh, and is more intelligent than nine tenths of the ſlaves who have been imported. This man inſiſted that he would not accept his freedom, were it offered him, but that he would prefer to remain a ſlave. If free, he ſaid, he muſt work for his food while he was young, and when he ſhould be old; whereas if he remained a ſlave, his maſter would give him food for his labour while young, and let him eat, in reſt, when he grew old. Alſo if ſick his maſter would let him have proviſions, and find him a doctor—but were he free, he could not work for food when old, or ſick; nor could he have a doctor, becauſe he ſhould be unable to pay him. This country, he ſaid, was good for him, he was born in it, and he would not like to go into any other. If he ſhould have "*the misfortune*" to be made free, he would learn ſome trade,

and work at that to procure him food and clothing.

He had acquired ſome idea of a future ſtate, and deſcribed it as a great and general principle among the negroes, to cheriſh any of their own colour who had grown old, and were in want, and to feed and compaſſionate them, if they were free, and unable to work; for which he obſerved they ſhould "go to heaven." He had no doubt of being taken to heaven himſelf, and told me that he was ready to die that minute if any one would kill him, adding that he would rather die than live! On being aſked why he did not kill himſelf, he replied—"*dat no good, if I ſall do dat, me go to hell.*"—Lying, ſwearing, and drunkenneſs, he did not regard as crimes: ſuicide, and giving poiſon to any perſon were, in his eſtimation, the greateſt, and almoſt the only ſins. Theſe he conſidered as certain of preventing any one from being received into heaven, of which, his ideas were extremely vague, and unintelligible. Hell he deſcribed as an immenſe cauldron of liquid fire, into which the wicked were to be plunged.

It occurs to me that you may, probably, have heard it queſtioned whether a perſon can be attacked with the yellow fever more than once; therefore, amidſt my unconnected notes, I may obſerve to you, that to the mortification of thoſe who have already ſuffered it, as well as to others, we know that it may and does attack the ſame perſon, not only a ſecond time, but many times *. An inſtance of this I may mention to you, together with a genuine Iriciſm produced on the ſubject, by one of the gentlemen of the hoſpital department, whoſe home lies a little to the weſt of Holyhead.

The patient was the ſergeant-major of the rangers, a man who, from the nature of his appointment, was neceſſarily expoſed to much duty, and great fatigue. He had twice been a patient at the hoſpital in yellow fever, and had both times recovered, after being in a ſtate nearly to be deſpaired of. On his re-

* Some medical men contend that fevers which, are communicated by contagion, cannot attack the ſame perſon twice. If there be any foundation for the opinion, it may ſtand as an additional proof that the yellow fever is not a contagious diſeaſe.

turning to us a third time, we were lamenting the ſeverity of his ſufferings, and the hard trials he had to encounter, when one of the hoſpital mates exclaimed—" Faith, and it's no wonder he ſhould be attacked ſo often, for he is conſtantly expoſed to the heat of the ſun, *night and day*."

Sometimes, without any feelings of actual diſeaſe, the eyes and ſkin of thoſe who, from their employment, are expoſed to the greateſt degrees of heat, become as yellow as in the deepeſt yellow fever. This happens to bakers, cooks, blackſmiths, and the like. A few days ago, in one of my walks, I met a man who had, ſome time before, been a patient in the hoſpital, and obſerving that his ſkin and eyes were of a ſtrong yellow colour, I aſked him if he was again ill; when he replied in the negative, adding that, on the contrary, he continued ſo well as to be employed *as a baker*, at the commiſſary's, and further remarking that he had himſelf noticed the yellowneſs, which he had been told was owing to the heat of his buſineſs.

Notwithſtanding the ſeverity of diſeaſe

among thoſe who are recently arrived in the Weſt Indies, we remark that the creoles, or creoliſed, are generally much greater invalids, than thoſe who are but lately from Europe. This fact we ſee particularly exemplified in the corps of South American rangers,—the officers of which have been appointed, ſome from the regiments newly arrived from England, and the others from among the coloniſts; and while the latter are feeble and ailing, and often unfit for duty, the former are active and robuſt, far leſs complaining, and ſeldom indiſpoſed, except when attacked with violent and dangerous diſeaſe. The creoliſed have a degree of languor and laſſitude about them, and are ſubject to head-ach, and febrile ſenſations, which render them inactive, and leſs capable of exertion than the others: they are alſo very ſubject to fever of a remittent, or intermittent type, which either invades them at irregular periods, or returns in ſevere annual viſitation.

In my medley of communication I muſt not neglect to tell you of a coincidence of

circumſtances which occurred, a few days ſince, and filled my mind, with pleaſurable ideas. In a moment of relaxation, at the cloſe of a pleaſant and ſerene evening, I chanced to take up a copy of Thomſon's Seaſons to peruſe; and as I was pondering in deep meditation over his beautiful Autumn, loſt in the delightful deſcription of a tranquil and philoſophic country life, which he ſo enchantingly contraſts with all the gay follies of faſhion, the riches of commerce, and the loud and ſplendid *glitter* of *war*, I was ſuddenly rouſed by the ſound of martial muſic, and the appearance of a body of troops marching by my window; when, with the book in my hand, the troops in my eye, and the drum in my ear, contending ſenſations ruſhed into my mind; and, delighted as I had felt with the deſcription of ſerene happineſs in a country life, the muſic and the ſplendour of Mars ſcattered doubts amidſt my all-aſſenting admiration; and, without knowing how to decide between the poet and the god of arms, I wiſhed for Thomſon's powers to deſcribe the exquiſite ſenſations which this accidental combination wrought in my breaſt. I looked

at the ſoldiers—read the book—liſtened to the muſic—reflected! The troops advanced —the muſic died upon my ear—my eye was fixed on vacancy: I reaſoned—compared—was abſorbed! and ....., Thomſon fell from my hand!

LETTER XXI.

Fatal effects of miſconduct under proſperity. Example of gratitude in a Negro. High price of wages. Improved weather and roads. Temperature. Matin feelings. Scarcity of water. An expample of the effect of climate upon Europeans. News received of an attempt of the French to invade Ireland.

Demarara, February.

As a contraſt to the feelings, which I told you in my laſt letter had crowded upon me in conſequence of an accidental coincidence of circumſtances, I may now mention to you another occurrence which has forced upon my mind ideas of an oppoſite nature—of a nature both painful and humiliating.

Among thoſe who were appointed to the rangers, without having previouſly been employed in the army, was a perſon in the medical department, and who, poor man, is now falling a victim to his good fortune. I was required, a few days ſince, to viſit him in ſickneſs, and found him lying in a moſt deplorable ſtate of wretchedneſs—exhibiting a ſtriking example

of the ſad effects of ſudden elevation. He had come an adventurer to this coaſt only in January, not three months previous to our invaſion of the colonies. His education had not been highly liberal, nor had he addreſs or talents to recommend him. A letter of introduction was all his fortune, and all his hope. By means of this he obtained the ſuffrage of two or three gentlemen of the colony, who introduced him to a profeſſional employment, which, though not ſplendid, was, under the circumſtances of his ſituation, ample beyond all that he could have expected. Soon afterwards, when the corps of South American rangers was formed, the ſame intereſt procured him an appointment, which, together with the employment already mentioned, produced him an additional income of nearly 500l. per annum. This exceeded all his calculations, and from proſperity ſeating herſelf in his lap ſo ſoon after his arrival, the ſudden change overpowered his feeble mind, and inſtead of operating to his benefit, it is very rapidly haſtening his deſtruction. His prudence did not keep pace with his fortune, but, overwhelmed with unexpected ſucceſs, he grew preſumptuous, and

aſſumed a vain importance, forgetting equally the duties of gratitude, and the circumſtances of his ſituation. His manners being uncultivated, his conduct was abrupt and vulgar, and he rendered himſelf, not only generally unpleaſant, but offenſive to his friends, and altogether inſupportable in the regiment. Having, in conſequence, fallen into diſgrace with thoſe about him, he gave way to ſottiſh habits, and from indulging too freely in rum, has injured his health paſt recovery; and he now lies a melancholy picture of diſeaſe and miſery. I found him in bed, ill with dyſentery, intoxicated, ſadly filthy, and emitting a ſtrong odour of rum, with other offenſive effluvia. A more wretched object my eyes ſcarcely ever beheld. He looked meager and worn down with diſeaſe and inebriety: his head and hands trembled from the effects of ſpirituous liquors: his countenance was pale and ghaſtly: his eyes dull and vacant; and his ſpeech faultering. His hair ſtood on end: a beard a fortnight long covered his chin: his ſkin was deep in dirt; and his body was wrapped in an old ragged night gown, which had been long a ſtranger to the waſh-tub. The curtains, ſheets, and bedding, were old

and ragged, of unwholeſome ſmell, and almoſt infectious with dirt. The ſacking bottom was alſo ancient and rotten, and ſo looſe as to ſink, in the middle, down to the dirty floor. Old coffers and cheſts, cobwebs, dirty gallipots and bottles, were the furniture of the apartment: which was a cloſe ſmall room that did not appear to have known the luxury of cold water for many years. A meager ſlave was his attendant, whoſe chief duty it was to hand him the poiſonous rum, whenever he was ſober enough to call for—"*another glaſs*!" My profeſſional occupation had often placed before me ſcenes of poverty and diſtreſs—objects of miſery and diſeaſe were, indeed! but too familiar to me, yet can I never forget the ſhock I experienced, when, upon entering his chamber, this ſinking object, and the crowded wretchedneſs around him, firſt met my eye.

Tell me, my friend, what ſtrange error, what infatuation is it that cauſes men thus to pervert the good things of life? What folly—what deluſive mania can it be that leads them to forfeit the comforts they might command, and involve themſelves in the very depths of miſery and of woe?

Although it is commonly remarked that gratitude is not a prominent virtue among the ſlaves, I may mention to you an additional fact, in proof that they are not deſtitute of this amiable quality. On the morning of January 13th, a well-looking robuſt negro, unexpectedly preſented himſelf at my door, tendering his ſervices, and begging that he might be allowed to work for me. Upon my going out to ſpeak with him, his countenance gladdened with joy, and looking animated and cheerful, he ſaid he would "*do ebery ting to 'blige Maſſa, wait upon Maſſa, clean Maſſa's horſe, and do all de work Maſſa tell him.*"

Not immediately recollecting his features, I aſked him who he was, whence he came, and how it happened that he addreſſed himſelf to me? When he replied—"*Ah Maſſa, if you no remember Prince, Prince no forget dat Maſſa tell 'em ſoldiers for break one great iron collar off Prince's neck, and give him for gnyaam when Maſſa at Mahaica!*" This brought him to my recollection, and I recogniſed an unhappy ſlave, whom, in one of my walks at Mahaica, I had met wandering in a cotton field, bearing a heavy iron collar upon his

neck, with three long iron ſpikes projecting from it, terminating in ſharp points, at the diſtance of nearly a foot and a half from his perſon; and with his body flogged into deep ulcers, from his loins to his hams. In this ſtate, and almoſt ſtarving with hunger, he appealed to my feelings. *Humanity* pleaded in his behalf, and without a too ſcrupulous inquiry into the whys and wherefores of the puniſhment, its tender dictates were obeyed. The poor man followed me to the fort: the ſoldiers grew indignant on ſeeing his naked ſores; and the impulſe of their feelings not being oppoſed, his neck was quickly freed from its load, and the maſſive yoke and its ſpikes were as ſpeedily converted into pot-hooks for the benefit of the meſs. Thus made happy, the thankful ſlave had now found his way to my home at La Bourgade, in order to make his further acknowledgments, and to tender me his ſervices. Shall it be ſaid that Africans know not the divine ſentiment of gratitude!

I before mentioned to you the great difficulty we meet with in obtaining labouring mechanics, and you will be ſurprized to know

the extravagant price at which they are paid in theſe colonies. Inconvenience ſometimes ariſes from the ſcarcity of workmen, and the few, whom we have among us, being ſenſible that their number is ſmall, and that others cannot be procured, demand moſt exorbitant wages, and commit their extortions without any ſort of reſerve. Only a few days ago the labouring carpenters threw down their tools, and refuſed to work, becauſe a board, appointed to regulate the price of wages, refuſed to allow them *four dollars* per day, inſtead of three, at which extravagant rate they have been paid for ſome time paſt.

The weather, upon this coaſt, is now pleaſant, and the roads delightfully good. We are advancing gradually into the dry ſeaſon. Occaſional ſhowers ſtill refreſh the fields, but our deep and muddy roads are become quite ſmooth and dry, and are at this time, perhaps, as fine for travelling as any that can be found upon the face of the globe. The kindly breeze is ſteady and powerful, and the thermometer, at noon, ſeldom exceeds 82°; a degree of heat that we are able to ſupport, without feeling thoſe heavy ſenſations of

languor and wearineſs, which are found ſo extremely oppreſſive in the ſultry days of an Engliſh ſummer.

Another very great comfort, not peculiar to this ſeaſon, but which we commonly experience in this climate, is the total freedom from that laſſitude and yawning, ſo common in England, at the hour of riſing in the morning, and which is not only troubleſome and unpleaſant, but frequently cauſes us to ſteal another hour from the already too ſhortened day. Here, it is but one thing to awake, and to get up. The inſtant your eyes are open, the ſlumbers of the night are wholly paſt, and you have no feelings of heavineſs or drowſy languor to oppoſe your riſing; but in wakeful ſprightlineſs you, at once, quit the pillow, and are ready to engage in the active purſuits of the day.

The decline of the wet ſeaſon, although pregnant with manifold advantages, has brought us acquainted with a new trouble in the ſcarcity of water. In conſequence of the increaſed number of perſons requiring to be ſupplied, the tanks, or ciſterns built for the

preſervation of rain water, are found very inadequate to the conſumption—and theſe being emptied very ſoon after the heavy rains had ceaſed, we have now, for our ſupply of freſh water, to depend upon the unwilling toil of a party of negroes, who are employed to go many leagues up the river in boats, in order to bring down caſks of water, from a diſtance beyond the influence of the tides. In conſequence of the ſeveral interruptions neceſſarily ariſing from this mode of procuring it, our ſupply of freſh water is not, at all times, ſo regular as might be wiſhed, and there have been moments when we could have almoſt lamented the abſence of heavy rains. Not only on account of ſickneſs, but from the neceſſity we are under of uſing a conſiderable proportion of ſalted proviſions, an ample ſupply of freſh water is rendered indiſpenſable at the hoſpital. Freſh animal food is again become a great dainty among us, and both the ſick, and their attendants are often compelled to ſatisfy themſelves with a diet of ſalt meat, and the vegetables of the country.

Letters have lately reached us from Barbadoes, in which is mentioned a ſtriking ex-

ample of the fatal influence of climate upon newly arrived Europeans. One of the regiments, which left that iſland upon the expedition to St. Lucie, in the month of April laſt, is already returned, a mere ſkeleton, conſiſting of only a ſmall body of invalids—and the proportion which fell in battle is ſaid to be very trifling, compared with the greater deſtruction cauſed by a foe, whoſe hungry ravages are far more direful than thoſe of grim-viſaged war.

We have likewiſe received ſome recent Engliſh papers, from which we learn that the French have attempted the invaſion of Ireland with only a few hundreds of men. Tell me if this be true—and if, as reported, the winds and the waves of our coaſt have fruſtrated the attempt, and ſpared our troops the neceſſity of puniſhing this act of temerity, and Gallic preſumption?

LETTER XXII.

Author accompanies a party upon an intereſting excurſion up the river Demarara. Different in ſome reſpects from his former excurſion up the river Berbiſche. Singular fortune of the author in happening to be of both parties. Objects of the excurſion. Author only a favored appendage. Date of departure and return. Preſent party only preceded by individuals. Remarks concerning the diſtance. Author unwell—recovers en route. Plantation "Golden Tent." Firſt night paſſed with Mr. Selles at the eſtate "Hermitage." Iſlands in the river Demarara. Kamonuy creek. Party dine in the boat. Woratilla creek. Mabeira creek. A wide ſavanna. View of Mr. Edmonſtone's dwelling. Dark windings of the creek. An accident happens to one of the ſlaves. His reply reſpecting the depth of the water. The party arrive at Mr. Edmonſtone's in the dark. Novelty of feeling themſelves walking upon riſing ground. Hoſpitable reception by Mr. Edmonſtone. Plenteous ſupper. Night accommodation.

Demarara, March 9.

You will regard it as an additional ſmile beſtowed upon me by fortune, when I tell you that I have been invited to another river excurſion, and again had an opportunity of becoming a traveller in the wild woods, and uncultivated regions of this coaſt; and that I

learn, from thoſe who have the beſt means of knowing the fact, that few or none of the inhabitants, however long their reſidence here, have journied ſo far up the rivers, and into the dark foreſts, both of Demarara and Berbiſche, as myſelf.

My late excurſion differed in ſome of its features from the former. It was made with different perſons, and fitted out with more of accommodation and comfort; but the other, as made with my comrades, was more completely a marooning party, and perhaps exhibited, in ſtronger traits, the characters and circumſtances which preſented themſelves to our obſervation.

In our expedition up the river Berbiſche, we were all ſtrangers, treſpaſſing upon the bounty of thoſe we met; and, without any acquaintance or introduction, depending upon the hoſpitality of perſons wholly unknown to us, for the means of proſecuting our journey: whilſt in the excurſion up the river Demarara, all of the party, except myſelf, were coloniſts, who were accuſtomed to the country, acquainted with places and perſons, and provided

with ſtores, and other accommodations for the occaſion.

Our reception by the planters upon the borders of the rivers was, in both caſes, ſo liberal, that it were difficult to mark the diſtinction—perhaps I might ſay that in the one inſtance we were cordially hailed as expected friends—in the other generouſly greeted as welcome ſtrangers. That it ſhould have fallen to my lot to have been of both parties, is matter of ſingular gratification to me; for they were not merely journies of idle curioſity: a ſtrong intereſt attached to them, both regarding our ſpecies, and the face of the globe we inhabit; and the impreſſion they have made upon my mind will be remembered with pleaſure, to the end of my days; for I always contemplate whatever concerns the habits and welfare of my fellow beings with feelings of very ſincere *fraternity*, and nothing ſo delights me, as to witneſs the actual condition of man;—whether he inhabit the pompous city, the unaſpiring village, the bleak mountain, or the wild and deep-ſhaded foreſt.

The leading objects of our excurſion

were to procure ſome roots of plants and trees, principally of the wild fruits of the foreſt, for the purpoſe of planting upon the eſtates of my fellow travellers near the coaſt; and to explore the river, as far as the falls, which is the utmoſt extent we could reach in a boat.

I was only an appendage—a mere ſtranger of the party, and had no care nor concern regarding the arrangements of the journey. Every thing was planned and provided by my companions, and I was invited to join them, only from the very liberal ſentiment that the excurſion might afford me pleaſure. The party, to whom I am indebted for ſo handſome a compliment, conſiſted of Mr. M'Kenzie, Mr. Frazer, Mr. L. Cuming, and Mynheer Heyliger.

We loitered on the way, like well-accommodated travellers, and made it a tour of eleven days, having taken our departure from Stabroek, at noon on the 25th of February, and returned on the evening of the 7th of March. No party, equally numerous, had been known to travel to ſo great a diſ-

tance from the coaſt, although individuals had, occaſionally, journied as far as, or even beyond the falls of the river.

We had no means of marking the diſtance, except by the Dutch method of making it ſynonimous with time: according to which, I might ſay that from Stabroek to the Falls is thirty-ſix *hours;* or, from the mouth of the river, to the part where it ceaſes to be navigable, nearly thirty-ſix hours and a half. But in this I cannot profeſs even an approach to the correctneſs of Dutch meaſurement, which gives, with tolerable accuracy, four miles to the hour; for although we were thirty-ſix hours upon the water, between the town and the falls, I dare not venture to calculate the diſtance at four times thirty-ſix miles; as the hour might be ſometimes eight or ten miles, and ſometimes not a third ſo many, according as the breeze, the tide, or the current, chanced to aid or impede our progreſs; or, according to the feelings of ſtrength, or fatigue, on the part of the ſlaves. And, indeed, if I ſhould fix the average at four miles an hour, according to the Dutch calculation, the diſtance, thus given, would ſtill be very incorrect, as we were pre-

vented from purſuing the direct courſe of the river, by our frequent calls at the different plantations *en route*.

During the morning, previous to our departure, I had felt very unwell, with ſtrong ſymptoms of fever, which being increaſed by heat, and the hurry of preparation, I was ſo ill at the time of going into the boat, that nothing but the moſt ardent deſire not to forego the excurſion could have induced me to have ventured from home; and, indeed, I have ſince felt more ſenſible, than I did at the moment, how extremely perilous it was to embark upon ſuch an excurſion, in this climate, under the troubled ſenſations I then experienced; but at that inſtant, nothing ſhort of actual confinement could have detained me behind. Happily the threatening indications ſubſided, and, recovering as we proceeded, I became quite well upon the journey.

We made our firſt call at an eſtate named "Golden Tent," belonging to Mynheer Meertens, where we were received in a very friendly manner, by Mr. Reid, the reſident manager, who keeps the houſe and premiſes in

ſuch high order and preſervation, that the general neatneſs of the home, together with the ſquare graſs-plats before the door, and other decorations around the building, give it more the air of an European dwelling, than any place I had ſeen in the colonies.

We reached a plantation called Hermitage in time for dinner, and there took up our abode for the night, being moſt liberally welcomed by Mr. Selles, who, with great hoſpitality, devoted the many good things of his houſe and table to our accommodation.

During the next day's journey we paſſed ſeveral iſlands, lying in the courſe of the river, but from being flat and covered with wood, they offered nothing more novel or intereſting, than the mere break they occaſioned in the naked view of the river. The firſt, is called the land of Canaan: the ſecond, Fort Iſland, being the ſpot where a fort was originally erected, and a military poſt eſtabliſhed for the defence of the colony; which was then ſettled higher up the river, than it is at preſent: the next is ſimply named

the third iſland. At the entrance of a creek called Kamonuy, we found a fourth, which was the laſt we met with in the courſe of the river. It was about two o'clock in the afternoon when we reached the Kamonuy creek; upon entering which we found a ſtriking change of ſcenery. Inſtead of moving upon a bold and ſpacious river, beſet with iſlands, we were now conducted into a confined channel of deep black water, leading into the ſombre gloom of the foreſt, and overhung with trees, whoſe dark foliage, meeting from the oppoſite banks, formed an umbrageous, canopy, which, even at mid-day, enveloped us, as it were, in the ſtill ſhades of night.

Having yet a great diſtance to make before we could arrive at our next place of reſt, and fearing leſt, as the evening advanced, we might miſtake any of the turnings of our channel, and be led into the uninhabited depths of the foreſt, we took our dinners in the creek, without ſtopping the boat, and, in order to avoid every delay, reſted the negroes only by turns, while we ſupplied them with the neceſſary ſupport of their toil.

This dark and narrow river was beſet with many broken ſtumps of trees, which endangered the bottom of our boat; but we eſcaped with only ſlightly rubbing againſt ſome of them as we paſſed.

From the Kamonuy we were led into the Woratilla creek, which was ſtill narrower and darker than the former; and out of the Woratilla, we turned into another creek, called Mabeira, which was ſo narrow as totally to prevent the negroes from rowing: they were, therefore, obliged to ſtand up in the boat, and puſh it on by reſting with the ends of their oars againſt the banks at the ſides. Soon after entering the third creek we were conducted into a wide and open ſavanna, at the remoteſt end of which we could juſt diſcern the lonely home of Mr. Edmonſtone, whither we were bound, and whither it ſeemed me might quickly arrive. A ſmall cannon was accordingly fired from the boat to announce our approach. But before we came near to the houſe, the windings of the creek took us back into the deep ſhades; and after proceeding in the dark for ſome time, we again opened into the ſavanna, and were as before deluded

by a ſeemingly rapid approach to the houſe—but again, and again, the numerous windings of the channel led us back into the dark boſom of the foreſt.

It was fortunate that we had reached the entrance of this very narrow ſtream before the night ſet in, or we might have paſſed the turning, and have been led into the deep woods, widely aſtray from our path; for during the time of our ſlow moving along the Mabeira creek, we were overtaken by the moſt profound and impenetrable darkneſs; in the midſt of which an accident occurred, that might have proved fatal to one of our ſlaves, who from not being able to ſee the bank, miſſed the land with his oar, and fell overboard into the water. Happily, from the habits of the negroes, they are in a manner amphibious, and this man had no ſooner reached the bottom, than he roſe again to the ſurface, and ſwimming after us, quickly climbed into the boat; when, on being aſked if the water was deep, he replied in the true negro dialect,—"*Deep like a hell Maſſa!*" then ſhaking his ſkin, reſumed his toil as if nothing had happened.

Before we had well recovered from the hurry of this accident, we were again brought into the ſavanna, when we perceived the lights of the houſe to be very near to us. The cup was now at our lips, but we were ſtill to be tantalized, and were again carried into the heavy gloom of the woods, where we continued to purſue the tedious windings of the creek, until the open ſavanna had grown nearly as dark as the cloſe ſhades of the foreſt, and we could ſcarcely perceive Mr. Edmonſtone, when he at length hailed us, at the front of his dwelling.

Our journey had not been enlivened with much of variety, even in the courſe of the river; and from the time of our entering the creeks, we were ſhut in ſombre ſolitude. In the foreſt a death-like ſtillneſs prevailed. The ſcene was cheerleſs as limited: o'ercaſt with ſolemn darkneſs, the woods ſeemed uninhabited, and ſcarcely did a bird or an inſect chirp a note to diſturb the ſilent ſhades.

From the landing place up to the houſe we aſcended by a riſing path, which our feet diſtinguiſhed as a great novelty, after ſo long

treading a flat ſoil interrupted only by dykes and ditches. A ſhort time after our arrival the table was ſpread with ham, pepper pot, laba, and other good things, of which our party partook with travellers' appetite. Soon afterwards we retired to reſt, the other gentlemen in their hammocks,—myſelf upon a bed.

The party paſs the night at Mr. Edmonſtone's—undiſturbed by muſquitoes. Expedition into the woods. Novel ſcenery. Trees of the foreſt lofty—their wood of hard and ſolid texture. Decayed trees not ſeen in the foreſt. Specimens collected. Few animals ſeen in the woods—fewer inſects. Author ſtrolls into an Indian hut. Returns to reviſit its inhabitants. Finds that they have decamped into the woods. Temperature of the air in the foreſt :—of the water in the creek : of the atmoſphere in the ſhade of the houſe. Eccentric perſonage reſiding at Mr. Edmonſtone's. Boat ſent round to the Sand-hill. Another boat diſpatched down the river. The party journey on foot through the woods to the Sand hill. Scenes of the foreſt. Intricate path traced through the thick woods by an old negro. Sudden opening upon a wide plain. Scenery at the Sand hill. Situation of the dwelling. An inhoſpitable home. Suggeſtion that the owner may be influenced by the chilling atmoſphere of the ſpot. Temperature at the Sand-hill. The party detained at this unwelcome abode. They quit it without a regret.

March.

AT Mr. Edmonſtones's tranquil and ſolitary home, we paſſed the hours of reſt in ſound repoſe, undiſturbed by the tormenting muſquitoes, which we had found exceſſively annoying at the Hermitage the night before.

In the morning Mr. Edmonſtone placed himſelf at the head of our corps, and, attended by four or five negroes, together with a ſagacious old Indian, we ſet out upon an expedition into the woods, in ſearch of the plants and ſcions, which had formed the leading object of our journey. Some heavy ſhowers having fallen in the night, we found it unpleaſant walking; but we perſevered in our purſuit, and toiled far into the woods, remaining upon our legs from nine o'clock in the morning until two in the afternoon, and, to my ſurprize, without experiencing any feelings of fatigue. An ample collection of rare ſpecimens of plants and fruits was the reward of our labour; and we had the further gratification of witneſſing, in the courſe of our walk, a variety of ſcenery, which cannot be met with in the flat and more cultivated parts of the colony. We traverſed thick and wild foreſts, croſſed rivulets and limpid ſtreams, climbed up rude hills, and deſcended into deep gullies; which created a novelty that animated our attention, and baniſhed all ſenſe of fatigue.

For the moſt part, our road was only a

narrow path cut by the Bucks, and ſo cloſely bordered, as to confine us in our walk, to the Indian file. At times the foreſt was thinner, and we could ſee to a diſtance betwixt its ſhades, or walk two or three abreaſt, under the trees at the ſides of our path. Twice only we came to open ſpots, which had more the appearance of plains than of thickets, and were mere patches of arid and ſandy ſoil, which refuſed every thing of nouriſhment to the vegetable world. All the other parts were more or leſs covered with ſhrubs and foreſt trees, the latter of which are of immenſe height and bulk. They are uſually perpendicular in their growth, and their wood is heavy, and of uncommonly hard texture, approaching, in ſome inſtances, to the ſolidity, weight, and even the ſound of metallic ſubſtances.

It occurred to me as remarkable, that in this long walk through the woods, we ſaw no decayed remains of trees, either ſtanding like the hollow ſhells we often ſee in England, or lying upon the ground, ſunk with decrepit age. Neither did we meet with proſtrate trunks, which had been broken down, or up-

rooted by the winds. All appeared in the fullneſs of health and vigour, as if their erect and ſtately pillars had, through many ages, been growing ſide by ſide, and were never to ſurrender to all-deſtructive years. Moſt of them were without branches, except near to their ſummits, where their thick foliage commonly forms a canopy which is not eaſily penetrated by the ſun or the rain.

Among a variety of ſpecimens, we collected ſome fine plants of the tonquin bean, the Souwarrow nut, the wild orange, and a ſpecies of the medlar. Of birds and animals the woods appeared to contain but few. Two wild hogs, ſome parrots, and parroquets formed nearly the whole liſt of all we ſaw—nor did the foreſt ſeem to abound with inſects, for ſcarcely had I paſſed a day, ſince my arrival upon the coaſt of Guiana, ſo entirely free from the annoyance of theſe minor objects of creation. Two or three muſquitoes, of feeble growth and feeble wing, were all we ſaw in the woods; and at Mr. Edmonſtone's not one appeared.

After our return from the foreſt, we par-

took of a moſt plentiful dinner, and in the evening ſtrolled about the environs, either ſeparately, or in divided parties, according to our ſeveral inclinations. In this ramble it happened that I trod my way into an Indian hut, where I found the family, conſiſting of a man, two women, and three children, employed preparing their pepper pot and caſſada for ſupper.

The next morning I roſe at an early hour, and returned to repeat my viſit to this group of Indians; when lo! I found only the empty hut! Probably they had, or had imagined a better reaſon for moving, than my diſturbing them by an abrupt evening call; but, whatever had occaſioned it, they had packed up the furniture and utenſils of their humble abode, and taking all with them into their canoe, had decamped in the night, into the woods.

From the Indian hut I walked into the foreſt, and, having a ſmall thermometer in my pocket, I ſuſpended it, for ſome time, in the damp and heavy ſhade of the woods; when it fell to 72: I, then, immerſed it in the open water of the creek, and it roſe to 73½.

In the houſe it was at 73; at noon on the day preceding, the mercury was at 81.

Before I take you from the foreſt-emboſomed abode of Mr. Edmonſtone, I ſhould tell you that in a ſmall garret of this ſequeſtered home is living a very extraordinary character, in the perſon of an old Scotſman, an antiquated and eccentric being of the ſchool of Loutherbourg; and who is, here, regarded as a literary phænomenon—a *literal* one he certainly is! He had formerly known better days; but having been reduced to poverty, he is become an exile from his country, and, in this profound ſecluſion, paſſes his declining days in the dull and harmleſs round of reading an old Hebrew bible, and two or three worm-eaten volumes of Greek and Latin. His perſon is plain—his figure meager, and his viſage pallid. In manner, he is formal and pedantic. His wardrobe and furniture vie with the antiquity of his library, and both apparel and apartment well accord with his limited occupation. His wants being few and eaſily ſupplied, he lives contented and happy. We found him teaching Mr. Edmonſtone's children to read; and this we underſtood to

be a duty of relaxation—a kind of remiſſion from his converſe with the muſty old volumes, in the peruſal and re-peruſal of which he finds the ſolace of his cares, and the gratification of all his remaining ambition.

We loitered away the forenoon at Mr. Edmonſtone's, ſending our boat round by way of the creeks, and the river, to meet us at an eſtate called Sand-hill, in the evening. We likewiſe diſpatched a ſmaller boat down the river, with the ſpecimens of plants, roots, and cuttings we had collected in the woods; and, after making an early dinner with Mr. Edmonſtone, he very kindly took us on, in his large canoe, to proſecute our journey. We returned down the Mabeira creek; but, inſtead of going north, when we opened into the Waratilla to proceed to the Kamonuy creek, and the river, we took the oppoſite courſe in order to penetrate deeper into the woods; and, when we had paddled, to a ſhort diſtance, up the Southern channel of the Waratilla creek, we were ſet on ſhore upon its eaſtern bank, and from thence took our route, on foot, through the foreſt to the Sand-hill.

This was a walk of two hours over rude hills, across deep gullies, and through woods, which to an European eye ſeemed impenetrable. The foreſt lies, as it were in waves of alternate ridges and vallies, and is ſo thickly beſet with trees, that a perſon unaccuſtomed to ſuch travelling could have no hope of making his way through it. At beſt our path was only that of the Bucks, which compelled us to follow each other in the unſocial Indian file, and, at ſeveral times, even this was not diſcernable *to us*: but an experienced old *negro*, whom Mr. Edmonſtone had ſelected as our guide and conductor, ſeemed to know every tree and twig we had to paſs; and directed our ſteps, with as much accuracy, as if a broad turnpike-road had been all the way before him; although it often happened that we had to form a path by pulling away the branches and brambles with our hands.

A ſhort time previous to our arrival at the Sand-hill, we ſuddenly eſcaped out of the deep ſhades of the foreſt, and one of the moſt varied and beautiful ſcenes, which can be found in the colony, unexpectedly opened be-

fore us. Suppoſe yourſelf in a country where flat waters, and heavy woods form one continued and unbroken ſameneſs, and imagine that after a walk of two hours, through the obſcurity of almoſt impenetrable foreſts, you, unexpectedly, ruſh forth upon an extenſive plain, where the eye immediately fixes upon a handſome houſe, together with a bold arch of a large river, winding its courſe, at a great depth below you, and the view extending far over the woods of its oppoſite bank, and you will have a tolerably accurate picture of the ſcene which, ſuddenly, preſented itſelf before us, at the Sand-hill. It was highly novel, being more open, varied, and extended than at any other inhabited ſpot of theſe boundleſs foreſts. Need I add, that it was highly enlivened and improved by our obſerving a white female ſtanding at the door of the houſe, whoſe flowing robes vied with the fairneſs of her form and perſon. This lady proved to be the niece of the lord of the manſion.

Correctly ſpeaking, the land, which appeared to us as a plain, was a mountain of ſand, whoſe flat ſurface was elevated at leaſt

a hundred feet above the river, and overhung the water in a bold precipice; but the oppoſite ſhore was low and flat, being ſcarcely raiſed above the level of the river, which cauſed the uninterrupted ſummit of its thick woods to appear before us like a green field, or a wide park of unlimited extent.

We advanced to the houſe, quite enraptured with its commanding ſituation: but,—ſhall I tell you!—that it was the abode of inhoſpitality!—ſhall I ſay that this houſe, "erected on the riſing ground," was, perhaps, the only one in the colony, where a ſtranger would have found an *unwelcome home!* We were greeted with a forbidding coldneſs—a freezing formality; and were entertained with a miſerable penury, of which I had not believed the coaſt of Guiana could furniſh an example; and I feel penetrated with grief and diſappointment in marking the Sand-hill as an exception to the general hoſpitality, which I had found, ſo eminently, to prevail in theſe colonies.

I will not attempt to decide in how far the conduct of the lord of this domain might

be influenced by climate, but there was much of ſemblance between the coldneſs of his manner, and the chilling air of his place of reſidence; for, on our entering upon the plain of the Sand-hill, when we came out of the foreſt, we had all felt ſhivering with cold, and were glad to put an our coats, which we had diſpenſed with in our walk through the woods. Between five and ſix o'clock the next morning I found the thermometer at 67. and at noon it only roſe to 80°.

It conſiſted with the tides of the river, and with our convenience, in waiting the leiſure of Mr. Edmonſtone, to make this reluctant home our reſting place for the night, and until the afternoon of the following day; but the ungracious reception we met with cauſed the hours to paſs very heavily: as ſoon, therefore, as the tide ſerved, and Mr. Edmonſtone was ready to accompany us, we took our departure for the "Loo," quitting, without regret, the moſt delightful ſituation in the colony.

The party arrive at the Loo in the abſence of the manager. Take poſſeſſion of the houſe, and ſeat themſelves at the ſupper table. Cordially welcomed on his return. Well accommodated for the night. Morning temperature. Party call at an eſtate to breakfaſt. An Adonis in the foreſt. A wood-cutter's cottage. Party entertained by a negro woman. Viſit a free mulatto named John Hill. A ſpecimen of negro labour. The party proceed to another wood-cutter's dwelling to ſleep. Scenery on the river improved. Night accommodations at this humble cottage. Scenery obſerved on the following day. The party make purchaſes from the Bucks. Viſit different places en route. Haſmond, a Dutchman. Pezano, a Spaniard. The latter an eccentric character—a chief among the Bucks. Has a plurality of wives—the ſenior a ſort of duenna. Pezano's employment. —His perſon. He conſents to go to the Poſt-holder's and the Falls, as a guide, but waits to follow in ſtate. Ooeſt Vrieſland. Pezano's arrival at the Poſtholder's. Mrs. Mutz ſick, and ſent into the woods to the Bucks. Hoſpitality of Mr. Mutz. Shooting with the Indians. Bathing. Spring water. Accommodations for the night.

March.

THE Loo is a plantation belonging to Mr. Haſlin. The ſlaves were employed four hours in rowing to this eſtate from the Sand-hill. At the time we arrived, the manager was from home; but, nevertheleſs, we took poſſeſſion of the manſion, ſpread the cloth,

and, placing our ham and the other proviſions of the boat upon table, without ceremony ſat down to ſupper. On his return the manager unexpectedly found, in his chamber, a party of ſeven, ſeated round the ſocial board; and of our ſuite were no leſs than fifteen ſlaves, making together a body of twenty-two perſons, who with proviſions, hammocks, and baggage, nearly filled the houſe ſo as to prevent its maſter from entering: but, like a true coloniſt of the country, and unlike the repulſive lord of the Sand-hill, this gentleman hailed us with cordial greetings, expreſſed himſelf happy to ſee the whole party, and even apologiſed for, what he was pleaſed to term, his misfortune, in not being at home to welcome our arrival. Immediately all the beſt things of the larder were added to our ſupper, and our bountiful hoſt further entreated us to ſuſpend our appetites, and allow him to dreſs fowls, eggs, and all he could prepare, to improve the meal. In ſhort his whole conduct was preciſely conſiſtent with the prevailing urbanity of the colony, and in the generous attentions of the Loo we forgot the arid and inhoſpitable Sand-hill. The evening paſſed away very pleaſantly, and

our hammocks were conveniently ſuſpended for the night. Early in the morning we reſumed our ſeats in the boat. Coffee was ſerved to us at the time of riſing, and we ſet off, without delay, to proſecute our journey to "the Falls."

The mercury in the thermometer was this morning at 72, being five degrees higher than at the ſame hour of the preceding day, at the more elevated ſituation of the Sand-hill.

After rowing for about three hours and a half up the river, we felt ſome calls of appetite, and finding ourſelves near to a plantation, we, in the true ſpirit of marooning, went on ſhore to ſeek ſome breakfaſt. Our reception was hoſpitable, and we were welcomed with much civility by the manager, whom we found to be a petit-maitre, whoſe fondneſs for the decorations of his perſon was very conſpicuous, and afforded us ſome diverſion. An Adonis in the woods was a great novelty; and notwithſtanding his politeneſs and liberality towards us, we could not but ſmile at the gaiety of his apparel, and particularly the depth of his frills and ruffles, which,

full flowing at his wrists and bosom, almost enveloped his meager person. Amidst the undressed Africans, and the still more naked Indians, about his home, he of course was unrivalled, and possessed the superlative gratification of standing alone—the *rara avis* of the forest.

But to the honor of this forest *beau*, his foibles in no degree interrupted his better feelings. He was correctly *au fait* with respect to the hospitable attentions due to strangers; and he entertained us with the utmost liberality. Nor did he confine himself barely to receiving and accommodating us with civility, but, further, expressed much regret that we were come for so short a visit, and urgently invited us to prolong our stay. At breakfast he provided us with a high feast, by giving us some hot rolls and fresh butter, together with a dish of fine oranges and other fruits.

After pursuing our journey about three hours further up the river, we came to the cottage of a wood-cutter, where we met with a very active and intelligent negro woman,

who welcomed us to her maſter's home, and, adding a laba pepper-pot to our boat proviſions, quickly ſet before us a very neat and plentiful dinner.

We afterwards made a viſit to a mulatto man named John Hill, an eccentric character, well known to the gentlemen of the colony: and who had here poſſeſſed himſelf of a ſmall houſe, and was ſettled as a free inhabitant, living in a ſort of independence upon the wood-cutter's eſtate.

In the courſe of our walk, I had the opportunity of obſerving a ſpecies of negro-labour that was new to me; having met a party of ſixteen naked ſlaves, male and female, in the act of dragging the trunk of an immenſe tree out of the foreſt, with ropes. They were conducted by a driver with his whip; and pulled on the load by mere ſtrength of arm, having no aſſiſtance from any machinery, and only availing themſelves of the ſimple expedient of placing ſmall billets of wood under the tree, at ſhort diſtances from each other, in order to prevent it from ſinking into the dirt, and doubling their toil.

Finding that it would be a long and fatiguing journey, to make the whole of the diſtance, from the wood-cutter's to Mr. Mutz's, the Poſtholders, on the morrow, and learning that there was a tolerable building on the way, where we might hang up our hammocks for the night, we rowed two or three hours further in the evening, borrowing an old negro woman to take with us for our guide, leſt, in the approaching darkneſs, we might paſs the hut without obſerving it.

The ſcenery now ſenſibly improved, as we advanced up the river. In the courſe of this day's journey we ſaw ſome lofty, irregular hills, which formed a very pleaſing and pictureſque variety, and relieved the dull uniformity of ſmooth water, and flat woods, ſo peculiar to this coaſt,

About eight o'clock we arrived at the dwelling which had been pointed out to us as a convenient reſting place for the night. Its exterior was not very prepoſſeſſing, and we found both houſe and accommodations the moſt comfortleſs of all that we met with in the courſe of our journey. The rooms were

ſmall and confined, but neatneſs happened not to be a predominant paſſion of the poſſeſſor. We felt no inducement to banquet away the night, but took a glaſs of ſimple grog, and very ſoon after our arrival, retired ſupperleſs to our hammocks—ſome in a cloſe unpleaſant chamber—the others, like the Bucks, under an open hovel.

We roſe with Phœbus, and, being glad to eſcape from the houſe, made the boat our dreſſing-room; then, according to the Dutch cuſtom, defended our ſtomachs from the morning damp, by a cup of coffee, and, without further delay, put ourſelves *en route* to Mr. Mutz's, the remoteſt European home of the colony.

In this part of our journey, the whole ſcenery became ſtrikingly changed, and, after the inſipid monotony of flat woods and water, the objects which now preſented themſelves were novel and varied; and all around us ſeemed calculated to excite a ſtrong and peculiar intereſt. Many of the Indians were moving upon the river in their canoes; ſome alone,

ſome in families, and ſome in larger bodies: cottages and Indian huts occaſionally opened to our view in the woods: high banks ſometimes bordered the river; and, not unfrequently hills and lofty ſummits crowned its ſhores.

From the Bucks, whom we met in their canoes, we purchaſed ſome parrots and Amazonian parroquets, called Keiz-keiz, together with ſome bows and arrows, war clubs, and various ſpecies of Indian implements, and houſehold apparatus; and feeling anxious not to paſs, unnoticed, any thing that might afford us gratification, we went on ſhore to make *en paſſant* viſitings at the ſeveral huts and cottages which caught our obſervation in the woods, or upon the banks of the river.

At one of theſe places of call we found reſiding a Dutchman named Haſmond, who had recently taken up his abode in this ſequeſtered part of the colony. Upon our remarking that he had very much the air of an old ſoldier, we were informed that he had been many years in the army of the Prince of Orange, and having retired from the ſervice,

had now built himſelf a ſmall houſe, and ſettled here to ſeek his fortune, as a wood-cutter.

At another of the cottages we met with an old Spaniard, named Pezano, perhaps the moſt eccentric character, and the moſt remarkable perſonage of the colony. This man had formed to himſelf a little cottage-abode, and was living at his own ſecluded home in the woods, the friend and aſſociate, and a kind of chief among the Bucks; and, although upwards of ſixty years of age, he had made his ſelection from the wild foreſts, and had taken, unto himſelf, no leſs than four Indian wives; of whom ſome were handſome, and ſome youthful, the youngeſt being only eleven years old. Thus you find diſparity of years, between man and wife, is not peculiar to poliſhed circles, or opulent cities: neither is the ſpirit of intrigue, for *l'amour piquant* is alſo known in the woods; and old Pezano's wives are not ſaid to rival Penelope in chaſtity.

I mentioned on a former occaſion, that it is the Indian uſage, for a man to take as many wives as he can maintain, and, the ſe-

nior being regarded as the duenna, is commonly appointed as a kind of ſpy upon the conduct of the others. Yet we heard that means were ſometimes deviſed, not barely to veil her Argus eye, but even to convert her into the inſtrument, whereby to obtain favors from either of the younger ;—and ſo you will expect it might be in the houſe of Pezano.

This old Spaniard was originally from Oronoko : but he had paſſed twenty-eight years, as a manager upon the different eſtates in the colonies of Demarara and Eſſequibo; and had now appropriated to himſelf this home amidſt the great family of the woods; where, from cultivating the friendſhip of the Bucks, he induces them to aſſiſt him in felling timber to ſell to the coloniſts, by which means, together with the produce of his gun, and the planting of roots, and other culinary vegetables, about his dwelling, he procures a ſufficiency of food for the ſupport of himſelf and his wives.

Pezano is of the ſmaller order of men—of low ſtature, ſpare habit, and decrepit figure. In colour he is ſcarcely fairer than his Indian

ſociates. His teeth are gone, and his noſe and chin appear as if they had appointed a ſpeedy meeting, for the affectionate purpoſe of embracing each other. Still he is lively and animated, and poſſeſſes great energy of mind, with far more of bodily activity, than his figure ſeems to indicate. Anticipating much of information and amuſement from his converſation, we were deſirous to have the old Spaniard as our guide, from the Poſt-holder's to the Falls, and therefore invited him to accompany us in the boat to Mr. Mutz's. He expreſſed a willingneſs to oblige us: but Pezano might not move in obſcurity! He was here a king, and muſt proceed in ſtate. He would, therefore, take his leiſure, and, attended with his proper retinue, come at another hour. Having obtained his promiſe, we were ſatisfied, and, leaving to his choice the mode in which he ſhould travel, we took our leave, and proceeded, without further delay, to Ooeſt Vriesland, the abode of the Poſt-holder; where we arrived about three o'clock in the afternoon.

This is the remoteſt home of the white people, the furtheſt from the coaſt and the ſea, and the moſt diſtant habitation poſſeſſed by

Europeans, in the ſettlement. It forms the link of connection between the bay inhabitants of the woods, and the white inhabitants of the colony, being eſtabliſhed by the latter as a poſt of communication for the purpoſe of adminiſtering friendly offices, and cultivating an amicable intercourſe with the Indians.

Within a ſhort time after we arrived, Pezano and his ſuite were deſcried, paddling up the river, in two loaded canoes. Upon their reaching the landing place, we diſcovered that the old Spaniard was attended by three of his wives; alſo by a party of the Bucks, under command of an old Indian, who was appointed their captain, and dreſſed out in a broad laced hat, carrying in his hand, as a further token of diſtinction, a tall ſilver-headed ſtaff, with which he preceded his troop in all the ſtatelineſs of his office.

Next to king Pezano, the bearer of theſe inſignia felt himſelf the mightieſt prince of the foreſt, and affected an air of dignity, not leſs conſequential, than is ſometimes aſſumed by greater men, upon being inveſted with a wand, or a ribbon.

The houſe of the Poſt-holder is rather ſmall, but arranged with much neatneſs. It is pleaſantly ſituated upon an irregularly riſing ground, and commands a fine arch of the river, which flows before it in a clear and limpid ſtream. We found it an intereſting and agreeable reſting place. The friendly door opened to us with a cheerful welcome. Our reception was ſtrictly hoſpitable, and we were entertained with a liberality as unbounded, as it was unaffected.

From Mr. Mutz we learned that, by making a long day of the morrow, we might complete our journey to "the Falls," and return to his houſe in the evening. This was pleaſant as unexpected intelligence; for beyond the Poſt-holder's lived neither European nor coloniſt: nor was there any place of call whatſoever. The wild foreſt was poſſeſſed only by its wild inhabitants, and for every accommodation, we muſt depend upon the limited reſources of our boat. Relying therefore upon Mr. Mutz to make the neceſſary arrangements for the remainder of our voyage, we left it to him and Pezano, to plan our proceedings for the following day.

The Poſt-holder is married to a Dutch-woman, but we had not the pleaſure of this lady's ſociety. She was in ill health, and had been ſent into the woods, to the Bucks to be cured. Our viſit was too ſhort to afford me an opportunity of obtaining any accurate information regarding the nature of her malady, or of the remedies uſed by the Indians for her relief: but I procured a few ſpecimens of gums, and nuts, employed by theſe inhabitants of the foreſt, in their practice of medicine.

Mr. Mutz pleaded the abſence of his lady in excuſe for treating us with, what he was pleaſed to term, "ſuch homely fare." But we could diſcover no cauſe of apology whatever, for a general neatneſs prevailed, and in this non-marketing ſolitude, an ample plenty ſpread the board, the table being covered with an excellent pepper-pot, an omelette, ſome fine pork, a large ham, and ſome rice.

We had alſo a great luxury in ſome pure ſpring water, as clear as cryſtal. I need not tell you how much more highly this was

prized, than if it had been the fineſt wine. It was the firſt I had taſted in the colony—and was indeed a high treat to me; although I yet continue to drink ſome wine, as a convaleſcent, and I may take this occaſion to caution you againſt ſurpriſe, if, upon my return to England, you ſhould find that, in this reſpect, I ſtill feel myſelf . . . . . *not quite recovered!*

Whilſt the dinner was preparing, we amuſed ourſelves, in company with Pezano and a party of Indians, ſhooting with the bow and arrow. The afternoon paſſed very delightfully, in hearing the converſation and intereſting remarks of the Poſt-holder, and the old Spaniard. In the evening, we again ſtrung the bow, and ſome of us alſo enjoyed the high luxury of bathing in the very inviting and pellucid ſtream of the river.

About 9 o'clock we went to our hammocks—ſome in chambers, ſome in the paſſages, and ſome under the houſe, which was built upon pillars, a conſiderable height from the ground. It will be ſeen from this, how little difficulty occurs in the nocturnal accommodation of large parties of friends or ſtrangers,

in a warm climate. Neither extenſive buildings, nor a number of rooms, nor even beds, paillaſſes, nor mattreſſes are required. A few cleets, or iron hooks, faſtened up in different parts of the houſe, for the ſupport of hammocks, are all that neceſſity demands. From this facility of arrangement for the night, the ceremony of invitation is not always held requiſite, and it is often ſeen that marooning parties, conſiſting of no inconſiderable numbers, make their viſitations unexpectedly, yet find convenient accommodation, even in the ſmalleſt houſes, and the moſt retired ſituations.

Journey from Ooeſt Vrieſland to "the Falls." The party meet with Mrs. Mutz, at an Indian dwelling in the woods. Some hills and a rock at the ſide of the river. The Falls a ſhallow irregular current. The party dine in the boat at the Falls. They leave their names, and the date of their viſit in a bottle.—Joy of the negroes on turning the head of the boat. Their ſurpriſe concerning the object of the expedition. A hill 200 feet high. Appearance of the foreſt upon this elevated land. Peculiar growth of the trees. A pleaſant evening at the Poſt-holder's. Temperature of Ooeſt Vrieſland. The party take their departure for the Loo: —dine at a wood-cutter's :—entertained by a negro woman, and a mulatto man. A ſevere day for the ſlaves. The boat overtaken by a canoe diſpatched with a friendly invitation. The party proceed to the Loo by the ſtill light of the moon:—arrive in the night. Find the family in bed. Morning temperature at the Loo. Unuſual feelings from cold. Journey from the Loo to Garden Eden. Another hard day for the ſlaves. The party paſs the inhoſpitable Sand-hill, and dine in the boat. Succeſsful expedient of employing the cockſwain to encourage the negroes. Magic effect of an extempore ſong.

March.

THE next morning we roſe at three o'clock to prepare for our laſt day's journey up the river. At a little before five we went into the boat, accompanied by Pezano, and attended by a ſage old Indian in his canoe

We were ſix hours and a half rowing to the falls. On the way we ſaw, within the woods at the ſides of the river, ſeveral houſes of the Indians, ſome of which we viſited; —but we met fewer of the Bucks moving in their canoes, than we had ſeen the preceding day. In one of the houſes we found Mrs. Mutz, the wife of the Poſt-holder, lying in a hammock ſuſpended over a fire, according to the Indian mode of ſleeping.

This part of the country was diverſified with hills; ſome of which were more lofty than any we had paſſed in the courſe of the river, and at one ſpot we obſerved, for the firſt time upon the coaſt of Guiana, a naked rock of ſtone, hanging in huge form, over the edge of the river; and it being the firſt maſs of the kind, perhaps I might ſay the firſt ſtone that I had ſeen in the colony, I broke off a piece to preſerve as a ſpecimen of the mineralogy of the country.

At half paſt eleven o'clock, we arrived at what are called *the falls*—a term which had conveyed to my expectation the idea of a caſcade, perhaps ſomething like the falls of Schaff-

hauſen, or the great body of the river pouring down from a vaſt height in one immenſe column, forming an example of very grand, or highly pictureſque ſcenery: but you will judge of my diſappointment, when you are informed that inſtead of a ſecond Niagara, theſe falls were merely the ſhallow water, gently rippling in broken ſtream, over ſome irregular rocks of whinſtone, which here croſſed the river from ſide to ſide, and that they more reſembled the running of an ordinary brook, than the ruſhing torrent of a loud-roaring caſcade. Nothing could be more tame and unimpreſſive. We were able to row in the boat up to the very rocks, and even in the middle of the river, to ſtep upon them, without wetting our ſhoe-tops in the current that was paſſing over them. In no part were the falls two feet in height. The Indians are in the habit of carrying their canoes over them, and proceeding uninterrupted, in their journeying up the river—or in the rainy ſeaſon, when the ſtream is more rapid, they make a path in the bordering woods, and carry their canoes through the foreſt, until they have paſſed the falls, and then reſume their voyage upon the water.

After inſpecting all that we wiſhed to ſee, and breaking off ſome ſpecimens of the whinſtone rock which cauſed the falls, we took our dinners in the boat, and concluded our expedition up the river by marking its date, together with each of our names, upon a piece of paper, which we incloſed in a glaſs bottle, and having corked it ſecurely, left it faſtened up in one of the trees.

I wiſh it were poſſible to convey to you a juſt idea of the joy and happineſs expreſſed by the negroes, upon putting about the boat to return. From rowing a heavy load always againſt the ſtream, and ſometimes againſt the tide, together with feeling no intereſt in the voyage, nor in any way comprehending the object of it, the journey, to them, had been very fatiguing, and they were totally at a loſs to conjecture why we had undertaken it. Each ſeemed to ſay by his looks—"what have ye journied hither to ſee?" and one of them even ventured to aſk, "*for what Maſſa come ſo far?*" when on being informed that it was to ſee the country, and the river, he exclaimed "*Country, where country?*" "*River wa' river?*" then, all of them uttering a loud,

and moſt ſignificant laugh, they laid to their oars with redoubled vigour, to conduct us back towards the ſea, and the flat fields of its muddy coaſt. At the very turning of the boat all ſenſe of fatigue was baniſhed, and with unurged exertion they rowed us to the Poſt-holder's, within three hours and a half; notwithſtanding a conſiderable delay, produced by our going on ſhore to aſcend one of the hills at the ſide of the water, which we conjectured to be about 200 feet above the level of the river.

We remarked that upon this hill the woods did not appear ſo thick and crowded as they are commonly found to be upon the lower lands, nearer the ſea; but the trees were of ſtronger growth, and formed pillars of uncommonly majeſtic ſtature, being, both in height and diameter, truly immenſe. Towards the bottom, many of them throw out ſeveral flattened projections, which, making ſo many parts of the trunk, ſtand round it, like the ſupporting buttreſſes of an old cathedral, and, in proportion to their number, form, between them, ſo many deep receſſes, into which

it would be poſſible to retire for concealment, or for protection, againſt the heavieſt ſtorms of rain; and in ſome inſtances as many as ten or twelve perſons might find ſhelter, between theſe projections, within the round of a ſingle tree.

We arrived at Mr. Mutz's between ſix and ſeven o'clock, juſt as it was growing dark, and found a plentiful ſupper, prepared by the bounteous Poſt-holder, for our refreſhment.

The ſociety of Mr. Mutz and Pezano afforded us another very delightful evening, and I could gladly have ſat until morning liſtening to their anecdotes and obſervations; but, at an hour, which to me ſeemed early, as indeed any hour would, under ſuch circumſtances, we retired to our ſleeping births, placed as on the preceding night.

At ſix o'clock we again left our hammocks, when, from the chilline's of the air, all the party complained of cold, and on placing the thermometer at the outſide of the door, the Mercury fell to 66—which was one

degree below what it had been at the ſame hour at the Sand-hill, and as low as I had ſeen it, in any ſituation, upon this coaſt.

Having effected the leading objects of our excurſion, it only remained to us to return with all ſpeed, towards the ſea, and exchange the wild ſcenery of rocks, hills, and lofty foreſts, for the muddy coaſt, and flat fields of ſugar and cotton. Accordingly we made our acknowledgments to Pezano and the Poſt-holder, and, as ſoon as we had breakfaſted, took our ſeats in the boat to proceed down the river. Early in the afternoon we arrived at the wood-cutter's, where we had been ſo hoſpitably received by the intelligent black woman of the houſe. Unluckily the maſter was again abſent, but, as before, we were liberally entertained by his kind Wowſki, and Mr. John Hill, the mulatto, who, to what we had in the boat, very quickly added a pepper pot, ſome caſſada, and ſuch other proviſions as the ſituation afforded.

He had been into the woods in the morning, and killed a fine laba, which, immediately upon our arrival, was ſcalded to re-

move its coat, and within a few minutes it was cut in pieces, and put into the kettle with caſſada juice, pods of red pepper, and various vegetables, for the purpoſe of being ſtewed into a moſt excellent pepper pot, which in a little time was placed before us upon the table.

The negroes took their meal of rice, and after giving them ſufficient reſt to fit them for their further toil, we proceeded upon our journey, purpoſing to ſleep at the Loo; but it grew late before we reached this eſtate, and the tide being for ſome time againſt us, it was a day of ſevere labour to the ſlaves, yet they ſupported it with great cheerfulneſs; and, in their willing exertions, evinced the high ſatisfaction they felt on returning towards the coaſt and the town. Excluſive of delays and ſtoppages we were fourteen hours in the boat. Towards the end of the journey we felt extremely anxious on account of the fatigue of the negroes—but upon one of the gentlemen ſaying that "ſurely the Loo muſt have run away" they replied with animation "*nebet mind Maſſa, if he run to de Sand-hill, we catch him dere*"—ſhewing their determination to pull on with ſpirit, until they came to the

Loo, however diſtant it might be:—the Sand-hill was ſixteen or ſeventeen miles further down the river.

The evening was peculiarly ſtill. A dampneſs hung over the river, and although the thermometer only fell to 74, the air felt chilly; but the moon ſhone bright, and upon the whole it was pleaſant; we therefore felt glad of the opportunity of making a tranquil moonlight journey, upon the ſilent river, amidſt theſe wild and endleſs woods of the South American continent. At one ſpot we heard the ſound of paddles upon the water, and on liſtening to it, found that a canoe was purſuing us. Preſently it came up with us, and we were accoſted by ſome negroes, who had been diſpatched after us, by the proprietor of an eſtate we had paſſed, to invite us to return and ſpend the evening at his houſe. At this moment we thought ourſelves nearer to the Loo than we really were, and declined the invitation: but afterwards, on account of the ſlaves, we felt ſorry that we had not accepted it. It was half paſt ten o'clock when we arrived at the Loo, and all the family were in bed; but they quickly rouſed from their

repoſe, and, in a ſhort time, a ſupper of grilled chickens, and various other diſhes was ſet before us, of which we partook with appetite proportioned to the lateneſs of the hour. At midnight we very gladly ſought our friendly hammocks, having ſuffered nearly as great fatigue from ſitting ſo many hours in the boat, as the negroes had experienced from the greater labour of pulling the oars.

The next morning all the party felt their ears and noſes actually pinched with cold, and on obſerving the thermometer, we found that it had fallen to 65¾ being ¼ of a degree lower than at the Poſt-holder's. Some of the gentlemen even complained that they had been kept awake in the night, from the ſeverity of the cold, which was a very unuſual occurrence, and ſuch as I had not before witneſſed in this climate.

Coffee was ſerved to us at the hour of riſing, and we afterwards ſat down to a moſt copious breakfaſt, conſiſting of caſſada-bread, ham, freſh butter, roaſted potatoes, plantains tea, coffee, &c. &c.

We embarked in our boat at the earlieſt moment of the tide, in order to make a long day, and, if poſſible, to reach an eſtate called the *Garden of Eden* at night; which with great toil we did effect at half-paſt ten o'clock. The whole day was ſpent in the boat. About dinner-time we found ourſelves oppoſite the Sand-hill, but, recollecting our former unwelcome reception, we determined not to go on ſhore, and contented ourſelves with reſting upon our oars, in the middle of the river, to take our dinner of bread and cheeſe, and cold ham in the boat.

This day was even more ſevere for the negroes, than the preceding, but they ſtill laboured with great willingneſs, being impatient to reach the town, beſides knowing that, upon the way, there was no other convenient reſting place for the night; and that from being longer abſent than we had expected, we were all anxious to arrive at Stabroek as ſpeedily as poſſible. But, however willing the exertions of the ſlaves, they ſhewed ſtrong ſigns of fatigue, long before we came to the Garden of Eden; and it was only by great encouragement, and a well-deviſed ſtratagem,

that we were prevented from being detained all night in the boat. Obſerving that they rowed with languor, and that we made but little progreſs, the cockſwain was deſired to exchange the helm for an oar, and to enliven his comrades with a ſong, encouraging them to join in chorus, and to pull together in muſical time. This operated with magic effect. Every ſlave was inſpired, and forgetting all ſenſe of fatigue, they again pulled with unwearied vigour. We were not more pleaſed with the reſult of the expedient, than amuſed by the ready ingenuity with which our wizard cockſwain compoſed his appropriate ſong, and gave it all the effect of enchantment. Reſigning the helm to the weakeſt ſlave, he placed himſelf amidſt the crew in the centre of the boat, and pulling his oar ſtronger than the others, he invented extempore lines for a favorite African tune, finiſhing each ſtanza with "*gnyaam gnyaam row*," "*gnyaam gynaam row*," in which all were to join by way of chorus; and we found that "gnyaam gnyaam row," never failed to give additional force to the oar—and conſequent head-way to the boat.

The names of the ſlaves, their wives, their food, drink, and all their pleaſures were introduced in ſong, and tuned to the pulling of the oar: likewiſe the names of each of the party whom they were rowing, their profeſſions, qualities, and occupations, and their ſeveral intentions towards the crew, all made a part of this inſpiring air, which, however ridiculous in the words and muſic—in its effect ſucceeded even to a wonder. The pulling of the oar, the directing of the helm, even the poſition of the ſlaves in the boat, and the compenſation each might expect as the reward of his exertions were all adroitly included, and "gnyaam gnyaam row" accompanied each ſtretch of the oar in chorus. Led on by theſe perſuaſive themes, each ſeemed to emulate the exertions of the all-animating cockſwain, and, throwing off the heavy marks of fatigue, they conducted us merrily and ſpeedily to "Garden-Eden."

Garden-Eden a ſugar eſtate belonging to Mr. T. Cuming. The party entertained by Mr. Boyce. Phenomenon of a peculiarly formed mulatto. His hiſtory, and the opinions concerning him. His figure, &c. The party dine in the boat—return to Stabroek on the afternoon of March 7th. Remarks concerning the excurſion. Peculiar fortune of the author. Temperature of Guiana. Range of the thermometer. River navigable nearly to the falls—lower part muddy and ſaline—diſtant from the ſea clear and pure. Its width. Diſtance to the falls, noting the different ſtages. The woods one unbroken foreſt. The creeks only dark holes opening into the woods. Situations commonly choſen by the Indians for their dwellings. The ſcenery. The ſoil. Happy exemption from inſects. Soil and atmoſphere moſt favorable to the generation of inſects. Matter of ſurprize that the party ſhould have returned in health, and without accident. Probable advantage which may perpetuate the remembrance of the expedition. Collections made. The perils of the foreſt. Its ſilent ſtillneſs.

March.

GARDEN-EDEN is an extenſive ſugar eſtate, belonging to Mr. T. Cuming, a rich planter of much merit, and of great influence in the colony. It is under the management of a Mr. Boyce, by whom we were received with greetings worthy the prevailing hoſpitality of Guiana, treated with an excellent ſupper, and

Falernum wine, and accommodated in great comfort until morning.

Previous to our departure from this eſtate, I was requeſted to make a viſit at one of the huts in the negro yard; where, it was ſaid, I might witneſs a phenomenon, and be "convinced of a fact which overturns all the ſceptical reaſonings of medical men," regarding the influence of imagination upon the conformation of the human frame, and its power of conferring or altering the figure of the fœtus *in utero*.

The ſubject of our viſitation was a mulatto man * * * * * twenty-eight years of age, who is ſaid to have been born with all his bones broken, in conſequence of his mother having been preſent at the horrible execution of a man, who was racked upon the wheel. Perhaps, as one of the tribe, I may be allowed to maintain my ſcepticiſm, even with this example before my eyes: ſtill as the appearances of the object, and the circumſtances of the caſe, were peculiar, and ſome of them well authenticated, I cannot, conſiſtent with the plan of our correſpondence, omit

noting to you what I heard related of the hiſtory, and what I obſerved with regard to the figure of this very remarkable mulatto.

The father was a ſtrong and healthy Dutch ſoldier. The mother a robuſt, well-formed negro woman. They had four children, all of whom are now arrived at the age of puberty: three of them are ſtrong and handſome mulattoes, healthy and remarkable for the ſymmetry of their figures; the fourth is the ſubject in queſtion.

The father is dead,—but the mother is ſtill living; and was brought to me that I might witneſs the form of her perſon, inquire into her ſtate of health, and aſk her any queſtions which the caſe before us ſhould ſuggeſt. She aſſured me that both herſelf and the father had enjoyed a good ſtate of health, and had conſidered themſelves as having been bleſſed with a happy exemption from diſeaſe: but that when ſhe was recently pregnant of this ſon, ſhe had unfortunately gone to ſee the execution of a man who was condemned to be broken upon the wheel; and that upon witneſſing this dreadful torture, ſhe

was ſo ſtruck with horror, as to be taken extremely ill, and was ſcarcely able to return to her home. She repreſented the ſenſations of the moment as very highly diſtreſſing, but was unable to convey any accurate deſcription of her feelings. For ſome time afterwards it was expected that abortion would follow; but that not having happened, ſhe was delivered, at the uſual period of geſtation, of this broken and disfigured offspring. Her having been preſent at the execution, and being ſo frightened as to be ſuddenly taken ill, were confirmed by one of the gentlemen of our party, with whoſe family ſhe then lived. The circumſtance of her recent pregnancy, at the time, was likewiſe proved by the fact of her delivery afterwards; but the preciſe period of it at the date of the execution, I could not accurately aſcertain. She is now of advanced age, and ſomewhat lame, but has ſtill the remains of a well-formed perſon. Upon examining her I obſerved an eruption like the cra-cra about the point of one elbow, and a ſmall irregular tumor upon the ſternum; but theſe were explained to be of late origin. In all other reſpects ſhe appeared to poſſeſs health and ſtrength proportionate to her years.

The figure of the ſon cannot be deſcribed by words. His perſon appeared as if it had been compoſed by throwing the materials into a bag, with a looſe congeries of broken bones, and ſhaking the whole together until they formed a ſomething approaching to the ſhape of a human being. It was not the tortuous conſtruction uſually occurring from ſcrofula, or the rickets. He had not the crooked twiſted bones of diſeaſe. They appeared as if they had literally been broken, and ſome of them badly united, ſome not united at all. The common marks of a ſickly conſtitution were abſent, and he enjoyed a ſtate of general health fully proportioned to the ſtructure of his frame: Indeed, from the minuteſt examination, I do not feel myſelf authorized to conſider this very peculiarly deranged conformation as the effect of diſeaſe, but am rather inclined to regard it as an extraordinary *luſus naturæ*.

His head was the only part that was well formed, and this, although of natural ſize, appeared very large, owing to the great diſproportion of the body and extremities,

which, from their extreme diſtortion, had not grown with the growth of the head.

With regard to his mental faculties nothing peculiar was noticed. He anſwered the queſtions that were put to him expertly, and was conſidered in point of intellect to be quite equal to the generality of the people of colour.

I placed my elbow at his ſide, when he was ſitting as upright as his figure would admit, and extending my hand upwards, found that his height, from the ſeat to the crown of his head, was not quite equal to the length of my fore-arm, from the elbow to the extremities of the fingers.

Every rib, and every limb ſeemed as if it had been fractured. The long bones of the arms, being divided in the middle, were looſely held together, by a membranous, or ligamentous union. Thoſe of the legs appeared as if they had been broken, and the two parts (or rather the four parts of the tibia and fibula) afterwards placed together in a direction parallel with each other, and thus united into one broad flat bone, the end of which projected

conſiderably forward in the middle of the leg, thinly covered with integuments, while the lower part of the limb was thrown backwards, with the heel up towards the thigh, ſo that if he had been placed in the erect poſition, the points of the toes would have been brought to the ground, inſtead of the flat part of the foot.

He had not the power of moving from his ſeat without aſſiſtance, except in a very ſlight degree, by a writhing or twiſting, and moſt unſeemly motion, upon his buttocks, wholly unaſſiſted by his limbs. During the day he remains always in the ſitting poſture, and from the diſtortion of his lower extremities, theſe are brought into a poſition ſomewhat reſembling thoſe of a taylor ſitting at his work. With ſome difficulty he could bring the lower arm to reach the head, but this was effected more from a kind of flexure at the ligamentous union in the middle of the bone of the upper arm, than from a direct motion of the ſhoulder joint, the action of which was extremely limited, from the want of the fulcrum commonly afforded to the muſcles by the bone of the arm.

Having breakfaſted, and made our viſit to the poor broken-boned mulatto, we took a long walk into the ſugar fields of the Garden of Eden, in order to employ ourſelves during the remainder of the time, while we were waiting for high water; and as ſoon as the tide ſerved, we went into the boat to complete our expedition. Some beef, and a roaſted chicken were added to our ſtore of proviſions by Mr. Boyce; and without ſtopping to go on ſhore, we took our dinners upon the water, in order that we might have the advantage of the whole tide, which, in this part of the river, was very ſtrongly the friend of our cheerful and willing ſlaves. Early in the afternoon of March 7th we arrived at the landing place (or Sterling) at Stabroek, having been abſent eleven days, during which time we had traverſed the woods, viſited a variety of eſtates, and made an excurſion of nearly two hundred miles up the river.

No accident, nor diſaſter, had occurred to interrupt us. We had travelled with great convenience. The utmoſt harmony and ſatisfaction had prevailed; and we returned in good health and ſpirits, highly

gratified with our expedition. No party, ſo numerous, had preceded us in journeying ſo far up the river; and we are told that there is not in the whole colony an equal number of white perſons, who have travelled to ſo great a diſtance from the coaſt. That it fell to my lot to be of this party was mere chance—an unſought diſpenſation of fortune; and one that has afforded me a degree of gratification, which few can have the power, or the opportunity of commanding. The journey was planned entirely to my taſte, but without my having any concern in the arrangement, or the execution of it; and I was invited to it merely from the liberal ſentiment, that I ſhould enter into the marooning ſpirit, in which it was formed, with peculiar pleaſure and ſatisfaction. In ſo far the judgment of my kind and attentive companions was certainly correct, and I am gratefully ſenſible of their politeneſs; while I am indebted to them for the high gratification, and all the accommodations of the excurſion.

It had happened to me to make a ſomewhat ſimilar expedition up the river Berbiſche, and I frequently hear it remarked, that I have

already ſeen more of the country, the foreſts, and the rivers of theſe colonies, than almoſt any of the inhabitants, although many of them have been here a greater number of years, than I can yet count of months.

I before took an opportunity of noting, to you, the great ſtability of temperature which prevails upon this coaſt; and I may now obſerve that this is not much interrupted even at the diſtance of 200 miles from the ſea. In the cultivated part of the colonies, upon the immediate margin of the ocean, the range of the Thermometer has been moſtly confined between 72 and 85 degrees:—At the remoteſt eſtates up the river, it at no time exceeded 84, for, although we occaſionally felt a degree of cloſeneſs in the atmoſphere, ſtill the breeze was never entirely abſent, and its deficiency was made up by the greater dampneſs and evaporation from the woods, ſo that the heat at the falls was not greater than in the full and open breeze of the coaſt: but, in point of coldneſs, the variation was more conſiderable, and we felt more ſenſibly affected by it. At the Sand-hill we had chilly ſenſations, although the mercury fell only to

67 degrees: at the Poſt-holder's it was one morning at 66: and, another morning at the Loo, when we felt the cold even piercing, it was as low as 65¾, which is the loweſt I have ſeen it, during a period of more than ten months, ſince my arrival in Guiana; and I may now add, that its greateſt range in high ſituations up the river, far from the coaſt, has been from 65¾ to 84 degrees, while the utmoſt variation upon the flat and cultivated territory near the ſea, has been from 72 to 87.

The river is ſpacious and not only an ornament of the colony, but highly uſeful to it, in a commercial point of view. It is navigable for veſſels of conſiderable burden, nearly as far as the falls. Its lower part, to the diſtance of many miles above the town, is muddy, and ſtrongly impregnated with the ſalt water of the Atlantic, but from the Sand-hill to the falls it is leſs impure and remarkably clear. We found by the thermometer that it was, at all times, a ſlight degree warmer than the ſuperincumbent air. In point of width, it varies at different parts, not growing regularly broader as it approaches the ſea. At the falls the channel is ſo narrowed, that, un-

aided by a ſling, I was able to throw a ſtone acroſs it from ſide to ſide. At the Poſt-holder's it was much wider, and it was only with great force of arm, that I was able to ſhoot an arrow acroſs it, from an Indian bow of middle ſize: at different parts between theſe two points, it was of greater width. Beyond the falls it was alſo broader, than immediately at that ſpot.

The following rude ſketch will convey to you ſome idea of the diſtance, from the opening of the river to the falls. It is according to the Dutch meaſurement, and the moſt accurate I could obtain:

From	To	Hours.
The Town of Stabrock	The Plantation Garden-Eden	4 ½
Garden-Eden	The Sand-hill	5 ¼
The Sand-hill	Mr. Bower's eſtate	3 ¼
Mr. Bower's	The Loo	1 ¾
The Loo	Mr. Lunck's	2 ½
Mr. Lunck's	Amelie's Waard	2 ¼
Amelies' Waard	Mr. Mansfield's	2 ½
Mr. Mansfield's	The Poſt-holder's	6 ½
The Poſt-holder's	The Falls	6 ½
	Total hours,	36 ¼

I ſhould remark that this is the time required in journeying up the river, with the tide, occaſionally, againſt the boat. To return towards the ſea, with the advantage of tide and current would require leſs time, by ſix or ſeven hours; which ſhews the extreme inaccuracy of this mode of calculating diſtance, except upon ſtill canals, ſuch as thoſe of Holland, where the traveller, in a more than common degree, eſcapes the influence of adventitious circumſtances.

The upper part of the river would be very intereſting and varied, were its heavy maſs of woods broken, and its banks enriched with cultivation; but, from being cloſely bordered, on all parts, with the crowded foreſt, it exhibits a degree of ſameneſs which becomes exceſſively fatiguing to the traveller. At various parts are inlets of ſmaller rivers, or creeks, which form ſo many dark channels, into the ſtill darker woods. In paſſing up the river theſe are not ſeen to any extent up their courſe, but they commonly appear only as deep black holes, at the edge of the foreſt.

The Indians very ſeldom erect their

houſes upon the immediate banks of the river, and whenever they happen to fix upon a ſituation near to it, they are careful to leave ſome of the buſh ſtanding, for the purpoſe of concealing the building. More frequently they place their dwellings upon the borders of the creeks, or within the woods at ſome diſtance from the river. From being mere ſheds, their habitations are readily conſtructed, at any ſpot where they may chance to take up their abode; and, in the ſelection of place, concealment, and convenience of embarkation, ſeem to be the grand deſiderata: the latter, indeed, would appear to be eſſential, as they often pack up every thing that belongs to them, in the family canoe, and ſuddenly depart to ſeek another home.

On the ſubject of ſcenery, but little occurred worthy of remark. From the uncultivated ſtate of the country you will perceive that it muſt have exhibited a rude ſameneſs of wood and water. No rich, nor ſtriking point can be found: no varied proſpect preſents itſelf from any quarter: no ſpot is particularly inviting. The palm of pre-eminence lies in a manner undiſputed, while water, and

crowds of trees form the univerſal ſcene. Whether in a valley, or upon the hills the view is ſtill the ſame, being confined by the trees immediately around. No opening, no rich nor extended landſcape is diſcovered: all is foreſt and river—river and foreſt: or, if you chance to open upon a plain, it is only a flat and wide ſurface—a vacant ſavanna, ſtill ſurrounded with wood, and wholly devoid of picturesque variety.

The Sand-hill was, perhaps, the only exception to this languid ſameneſs of ſcenery. There, the proſpect was ſomewhat more animated, and from one bank of the river being much elevated, and diveſted of trees, it overlooked the other, commanding a view acroſs the water, and to a conſiderable diſtance over the woods of the oppoſite ſhore: ſtill it comprehended only the ſmooth water, and the ſmooth green ſurface of the unbounded foreſt.

If I ſpeak of the ſoil, it can be only in vague and general remark; but it appeared to us that after the land became hilly, and aſſumed an irregular and unequal ſurface, it was poor, and not ſuch as ſeemed capable,

under all the circumſtances of climate, of being cultivated to much profit. In ſome parts it was rocky; in others ſandy; and, in all, very unlike the rich exuviæ which form the flatter lands of this all-fertile coaſt.

I might notice it as a peculiarly happy exemption that, during our excurſion, we were almoſt wholly free from the tormenting annoyance of inſects. In the deepeſt woods they were only remarkable from their abſence. To me the muſquitoes conſtitute, perhaps, the greateſt evil of the climate, and my all-bitten limbs were peculiarly ſenſible of the reſpite they obtained during this expedition. After we had paſſed the eſtate of Mr. Selles, where we ſpent the firſt night, I obſerved only four of theſe inſects, two of which I ſaw in the woods of the Mabeira creek, and the other two were announced to me by their odious note, at my ear, in the night.

It is remarked that neither in the rudeſt, nor in the beſt cultivated parts of theſe countries do inſects moſt abound. A ſtate of the ſoil, between high improvement, and wild neglect; or that ſort of climate created by

partial cultivation, is moſt congenial to theſe noxious tribes; and thus does the peſtiferous atmoſphere of half-cleared woods, and half-cultivated fields ſeem at once the poiſon, and the pabulum of animal life:—operating with a twofold power, it generates the minor while it deſtroys the higher objects of creation.

On reaching the town we were hailed moſt cordially by our friends, who, in our protracted return, had anticipated all the evils of ſickneſs and misfortune; and it ſeemed matter of ſurprize that ſo large a party ſhould have concluded ſo long an excurſion, all in good health, and without having met with any kind of accident or diſaſter. To ſome of the gentlemen, the change from their ordinary habits and mode of life, was great, and it had not been ſurprizing if in this climate, under ſuch circumſtances, troubleſome effects had enſued; but, happily, from the time of my loſing the threatening ſenſations which had oppreſſed me at the period of our embarkation, not an individual of the party ſuffered even an hour's interruption of health.

We derived much gratification from the

expedition, and although our collections from the animal, and mineral kingdoms, were but inconſiderable, we profited of the vegetable world very amply; and it is probable that the remembrance of our excurſion will be perpetuated: for, in the courſe of a few years, its effects will become conſpicuous, from a valuable aſſemblage of the plants and fruits of the foreſt enriching the ſugar eſtates, and cotton fields of the coloniſts.

Of the animal world a few monkies and Amazonian parroquets conſtituted the whole of our collection; and of minerals all we had an opportunity of procuring were a few coarſe ſpecimens of common whinſtone, which we broke from the bed of "the Falls," and the rocks in their vicinity. Of the implements and apparatus of the Indians we procured a liberal ſtore.

Much had been ſaid of the multiplied perils of the foreſt, and we had heard of fierce tigers, enormous ſnakes, poiſonous ſerpents, runaway negroes, ferocious ſavages, and various other dangerous inhabitants of the woods and the waters, but it did not happen to

us to be interrupted by any of them; and although tigers, ſerpents, buſh-negroes, and and wild Indians, doubtleſs, exiſt in theſe regions, the peril to be apprehended from them, bears no ſort of proportion to the extravagant alarm pictured by the fearful imaginations of ſtay-at-home travellers. In many parts the profound ſtillneſs of the foreſt conveyed the idea of a lifeleſs ſolitude, uninhabited by man, beaſt, bird, or inſect; indeed from the utter ſilence which prevailed, it might have ſeemed that we had travelled beyond the limits of animated creation; and that we had literally, reached .... the end of the world!

LETTER XXIII.

The author's horſe a victim to the climate. The detachment of the St. Domingo hoſpital ſtaff receives inſtructions to leave Guiana. Author's reflections on the change. Greetings of a negro woman on the author's return from his river Excurſion. Heads of news which meet the ears of the party on their return from "the Falls."

Demarara, March 18.

At my return from our late excurſion the firſt object that attracted my attention, upon approaching the barracks of the hoſpital department, was a ſtring of negroes ſinging out in the ſailors' cry,—yeoh-yeoh, yeoh-yeoh, and hauling at a long rope, towing ſomething heavy round the corner of the building. Curioſity arreſted me, for a moment; when, alas! I diſcovered at the end of the cord, the body . . . . . of my poor horſe! who, in the laſt night of his maſter's abſence, had fallen a victim to the relentleſs foe, who ſpares neither man, nor the patient ſteed. He was now being dragged away to his grave, and my pauſe of curioſity only brought me the

ſad gratification of caſting a laſt look upon his corpſe.

This is a heavy loſs to me, and leſs on account of the exorbitant price of horſes in theſe colonies, than from the extreme difficulty, or perhaps the impoſſibility of finding another, at any price whatever. I had long waded through the mud before an opportunity offered of providing myſelf, and by mere chance, I had, at length, been well ſuited—but I had ſcarcely brought my horſe into condition fit for riding, before he was ſnatched from me, by what is often termed the ſeaſoning malady of the climate.

It happens, however, that I ſhall not long feel this privation, as letters have, at length, arrived from head-quarters, containing orders for my removal from the coaſt of Guiana to St. Domingo. This is the arrangement to which I had been looking from my earlieſt arrival in theſe colonies, but on account of it being ſo long delayed, and my having received inſtructions for continuing here, I had begun to expect that the hoſpital ſtaff, already at St. Domingo, had been found ſufficient for the

duties of that ſtation, without recalling the detachment of the medical department ſerving upon this coaſt: but, by the letters which have now reached me, I learn that the direful malady of theſe regions has been ſeverely fatal among the hoſpital officers at St. Domingo; and that, although the number of troops is conſiderably decreaſed, the medical attendants have ſuffered ſo extenſively, that ſtrong reinforcements are neceſſary, to enable the hoſpital department to do juſtice to the, yet, multitudes of ſick.

In ſo far as this change of ſtation will afford me an opportunity of ſeeing more of the Weſtern World, I ſhall hail it with ſatisfaction; but my heart ſorrows at the thought of treading in the ſandals of my loſt brethren and comrades,—men, with whom I have lived in habits of intimacy, and cloſe friendſhip—partaking of the ſame perils, eating from the ſame diſh, and repoſing in the ſame cabin; and although I neither regard the preſent afflicting ſcourge of our army as contagious, nor feel the ſlighteſt perſonal apprehenſion of diſeaſe, ſtill I cannot but experience a mournful depreſſion, which muſt in a

degree unfit me for the urgent duties I may have to encounter upon the very ſpot where my comrades have fallen. Nor will it be without ſome ſenſe of regret that I ſhall quit the hoſpitals of my own creating, and which, after nearly twelvemonths of anxious exertion, I have now brought into a ſtate well fitted for affording the neceſſary comfort, and accommodations to the ſick. Indeed I may obſerve that notwithſtanding my deſire to viſit the different parts of the Weſt Indies, habit had reconciled me to this coaſt, and I had felt a kind of ſatisfaction in the proſpect of quietly directing a department I had ſo earneſtly toiled to eſtabliſh, and to arrange; and which had ſo long filled my meaſure of anxious care: but you know how entirely I have given myſelf to the neceſſities of the ſervice, and will do me the juſtice to believe that wherever my exertions can be rendered moſt uſeful, there I ſhall be moſt ready to execute the duties of my appointment.

I ſhould not omit noting to you that, on my late return, I was almoſt ſtifled with the greetings of a fat old negro woman of the houſe, who, at the moment I appeared in her

ſight, ran to me in loud ſhoutings of joy, and, ſeizing me in her arms, ſqueezed me until I had ſcarcely power to ſpeak; at the ſame time calling out to one of her ſable companions—"Come and help Jenny hug Maſſa, for me no ſavez hug Maſſa enough, for tell him how glad Jenny for ſee Maſſa again." But the gratulations of both Jenny and her friend together, became alarmingly impreſſive; and, in order to prevent the evils of impeded reſpiration, I was compelled rudely to force myſelf from their jetty embraces.

The leading heads of news which met our return, were the king's proclamation on the unſucceſsful iſſue of Lord Malmſbury's Embaſſy to Paris — the confirmation of an expedition from Martinique having captured the Iſland of Trinidad—and a report that another expedition was fitting out againſt Porto Rico. We have ſince heard of the diſaſtrous fate of a French ſquadron upon our coaſt, and their unſucceſsful invaſion of Ireland: and it is now rumoured that an expedition will ſoon ſail from the iſlands to attack Surinam.

The capture of Trinidad we hail as an event peculiarly fortunate for theſe colonies, as it again opens to us the proſpect we had contemplated, previous to the rupture with Spain, and promiſes to us a ſupply of freſh proviſions, by our eſtabliſhing a contract for the purchaſe of ſome of the wild cattle, which are found in the woods of that ſettlement.

LETTER XXIV.

Celebration of the Stadtholder's birth-day. Conduct of a ſoi-diſant "patriot." Celebration of St. Patrick's day. Concluſion of the feſtival. Inſolent manifeſto of Victor Hugues. News received of the arrival of the captured Ship "Cotton Planter" with invalids after a paſſage of a hundred and eight days. A ſale of negroes. Infants brought to point to a ſlave as to a lottery ticket. Average value of the ſlaves. Remark of the Agent. Indecorum of ſome female purchaſers. Anxious appeals of a parent and her offſpring. General ſympathy concerning them. A white negro. A piebald negreſs.

Demarara, March 29.

I MIGHT have told you in my laſt letter that the eighth inſt., the day after our return from our river excurſion, was the Stadtholder's birth-day, and conſequently a day of feſtivity at Demarara. It was commemorated, by the Dutch officers, in our ſervice, giving a ſplendid ball and ſupper at their barrack in the evening: all the beſt company and the beſt proviſions of the colony were aſſembled on the occaſion. The ball-room was extremely crowded, and although it was ſo intenſely hot that it was matter of aſtoniſhment how

any perſon could ſupport the fatigue of dancing in it, ſtill the ladies, feeble and languid as they commonly appear, ſo much enjoyed their favorite amuſement, as not to retire to the ſupper room until near two o'clock in the morning. The ſupper was elegant and very handſomely ſerved. It conſiſted of nearly 150 diſhes, and was compoſed of all the beſt fruits and dainties of the colony. Unhappily the harmony of the feſtival was interrupted by the perverſe conduct of one of the party, a *ſoi-diſant patriot*, who, in the violence of his politics, oppoſed himſelf to the general will of the company, and refuſed to ſtand up to drink the health of the Stadtholder. The officers were highly incenſed, at meeting with ſuch an act of rudeneſs, and inſult from one of their gueſts—and ſome even propoſed to toſs the "patriot chair" out at window.

On the 17th we had another great feſtival, in honor of St. Patrick, given by a party of gentlemen from the "*land of ſaints.*" We ſat down to the number of fifty, Engliſh, Iriſh, and Dutch. True Iriſh hoſpitality ſpread the bounteous board, and we were regaled with muſic, toaſts, and ſongs appropriate to the

day. Harmony and good cheer prevailed, and in ſocial conviviality the evening wore pleaſantly away, without the ſcene of noiſy intoxication I had expected.

The party ſeparated about eleven o'clock, when moſt of the gueſts retired to their reſpective homes; but the next morning I learned that a ſelect few of St. Patrick's devoted ſons, conceiving that they had not done due honors to their patron, again took their ſeats, and drank to the dear iſland in more copious revelry, enlivening their midnight ſhouts and toaſts with the all-animating chorus of ſhattered glaſſes, decanters, and bottles.

You will not be ſurprized to learn that a moſt inſolent manifeſto has lately met our hands, publiſhed by Victor Hugues, in which he calls the inhabitants of Tobago, Demarara and Eſſequibo, Berbiſche, St. Lucie, and St. Domingo a herd of traitors, and gives orders that they ſhould be regarded as pirates, if captured on board of privateers. All theſe ſettlements he declares to be in a ſtate of ſiege, aſſerting that they are garriſoned by emigrants —a ſet of men, who, being without country,

flag, or government, he inſiſts, cannot be entitled to the ſame terms as "*poliſhed nations!*"

He authoriſes and directs ſhips of war and privateers to make prizes of all veſſels trading to theſe ports: and further, he charges the Americans with not having maintained the articles of the treaty, between the two nations; and therefore proclaims that they have forfeited the friendſhip of the French Republic!

We read with great ſatisfaction, the arrival of the ſhip Cotton-Planter at Portſmouth, after a paſſage of a *hundred and eight* days from Demarara. Not having ſooner heard of her, we had many anxious conjectures regarding her ſafety. She is one of the heavy Dutch veſſels which fell into our poſſeſſion on the capture of theſe colonies; and being a large ſhip, and commodious for conveying troops acroſs the Atlantic, we put a party of invalids, with ulcers, on board her, to be carried to England, under the immediate care of Mr. Beane, one of the mates of the general hoſpital; and ſubject to the command of Captain De Courcy of the 93d regiment.

Both from her form and bulk, we had expected that she might make a tedious passage; but, even with all the delays of our late ill-fated expedition in remembrance, our anticipations had not led us to imagine that, without some great disaster, the voyage could have been protracted to a period of nearly sixteen weeks.

Not simply from curiosity, but from a desire of acquiring instruction, from whatever occurs of peculiar interest, I have again been led to be present at one of those most humiliating scenes—a sale of *human* merchandise, where I saw what is here termed a *prime cargo* of three hundred *men* and *women* from the Gold Coast of Africa—all human beings like ourselves, exposed to public *vendue* even as the herds of sheep and oxen in Smithfield market! But although I had now been more than a year in the West Indies, I was glad to find that my European feelings were not yet so entirely blunted, as to allow me to witness such a scene without experiencing the painful sensations, which naturally arise in the breast of an Englishman, upon seeing his fellow-creatures thus miserably degraded.

The crowd was as great as at a Coventry ſhow-fair; and amidſt the throng I obſerved many females, as well white as of colour, who, decked out in tinſel finery, had all come to the *roupe* to buy ſlaves, either for themſelves, their maſters, or keepers. Infants, too, were brought, as before, to point the lucky finger to a ſable drudge for *little ſelf*, upon the ſame prejudice which leads mama to take dear babe to a lottery office, to finger out the happy ticket, which is to make little Miſſey's fortune!

The poor blacks were not expoſed to public gaze upon a high ſtool, in order to be firſt examined, and then knocked down at the hammer, as at the Dutch ſale at Berbiſche,—but were divided into three great lots, according to their value; and, the price being fixed, the purchaſers were left to ſelect from whichever diviſion they might prefer. Boys, from eleven to fourteen years of age, ſold for 600 or 700 guilders. The price of the women was from 700 to 800; and of the men from 700 to 900; but a few of the ſtrongeſt were valued ſomewhat higher. The agent who conducted the ſale is a liberal man, poſſeſſed of humane ſentiments, and a cultivated mind,

but it is, unfortunately, *his calling* to deal in human flesh; and he very justly remarked to me, that in following this occupation, it is necessary to *give an opiate* to the finer feelings of nature.

The coarse airs, and indecent vulgarity exhibited by a negress, (who had probably been herself exposed in a similar manner,) and a mulatto woman, her associate, towards some of these poor African girls, were both striking and disgusting. Each of these cloudy nymphs had wheedled her lord to grant her the privilege of choosing a slave, to be the immediate attendant of her dark-hued person; and in making their selection they used as little delicacy in touching, turning about, and trying their fellow blacks, as a butcher would in examining a pen of any other sort of black cattle in an open market. Common decency was outraged in these proceedings, which grossly aggravated a scene that, under its best colours, is most cruelly humiliating.

I committed a heavy trespass upon my feelings by remaining for a considerable time at this sale, but at length, hurt and shocked

at what I had witneſſed, and led into painful reflection upon the ſadly chequered lot of our ſpecies, I made my retreat from this market of human woe, where not only the laws of decorum are openly invaded, and the rules of propriety ſet at defiance, but where all the ſocial ties of our nature are broken down and bartered for gold.

Amidſt a ſcene, every way repugnant to humanity I was pleaſed to remark that a general ſympathy was excited towards one particular family, whoſe appeals to the compaſſion of the multitude were not leſs powerful than their claims. This family conſiſted of a mother, three daughters, and a ſon. The parent, although the days of her youth were paſt, was ſtill a well-looking woman; the children appeared to be from fourteen to twenty years of age: they were very like the mother, and ſtill more reſembled each other, being all of diſtinguiſhed face and figure, and remarkably the handſomeſt negroes of the whole cargo. Their diſtreſs leſt they ſhould be ſeparated, and ſold to different maſters, was ſo ſtrongly depicted upon their countenances, and expreſſed in ſuch lively, and im-

preſſive appeals, that the whole crowd were, impulſively, led to commiſerate their ſufferings; and, by univerſal conſent, they were removed from the three great lots, and placed in a ſeparate corner by themſelves, in order that they might all be ſold to the ſame maſter.

Obſerving their extreme agitation, I was led particularly to notice their conduct, as influenced by the terror of being torn from each other, and I may truly ſay, that I witneſſed a juſt and faithful repreſentation of . . . . . *the diſtreſſed mother!* and ſuch as might bid defiance even to the all-imitative powers of a Siddons! for the fears of the parent, leſt ſhe ſhould be ſeparated from her children, or theſe from each other, were anxious and watchful beyond all that imagination could paint, or the moſt vivid fancy pourtray. When any one approached their little group, or chanced to look towards them with the attentive eye of a purchaſer, the children, in broken ſobs, crouched nearer together, and the tearful mother, in agonizing impulſe, inſtantly fell down before the ſpectator, bowed herſelf to the earth, and kiſſed his feet; then, alternately clinging to his legs, and preſſing her children to her

boſom, ſhe fixed herſelf upon her knees, claſped her hands together, and, in anguiſh, caſt up a look of humble petition, which might have found its way even to the heart of a Caligula!—and, thus, in Nature's trueſt language, did the afflicted parent urge the ſtrongeſt appeal to his compaſſion, while ſhe implored the purchaſer, in dealing out to her the hard lot of ſlavery, to ſpare her the additional pang of being torn from her children: —to forbear expoſing her to the accumulated agonies which would reſult from forcing thoſe aſunder, whom the all-wiſe diſpoſer of events had bound together by the moſt ſacred ties of nature and affection.

I forget if I mentioned to you in my former letter, when ſpeaking of the phœnomenon I had ſeen, in the perſon of a twiſted and broken mulatto at Garden Eden, that he was the property of Mr. Cuming, our very hoſpitable neighbour at the plantation Kitty, near to Fort William Frederic; where, I may now tell you that, ſince my return from "the falls," I have had an opportunity of ſeeing two other ſtriking phœnomena of our ſpecies, in the perſons of a *white negro*, and a *piebald*

negreſs. Theſe are very uncommon objects, more particularly the latter, and it is remarkable that the three moſt ſtriking examples of natural curioſity in the whole colony, or perhaps in the Weſt Indies, ſhould happen all to be the property of the ſame individual.

Were not Mr. Cuming's fortune already amply made, and were he diſpoſed to avail himſelf of ſuch a method of acquiring it, he might, probably, enſure it to a vaſt amount, by having theſe very ſingular ſpecimens of the human race conducted to Europe, and exhibited for the gratification of the curious.

The *white negro*, as he is denominated, is a boy about twelve years of age, who was born on board of ſhip, on the paſſage from Guinea, of perfectly white ſkin, although both his father and mother were jet black. He is even *whiter*, but I know not if I ſhould ſay *fairer*, than Europeans, for it is a dead chalk-white, without the agreeable relief of the fine blue veins, and ruddy tints of an extra-tropical, or more particularly of a Britiſh ſkin. In form and feature he ſtrictly reſembles other negroes, having the head and face long, with

the hair ſhort and curling like wool, the mouth large, with thick lips, and the noſe broad and flat. His eyes are blue, the eye-brows and eye-laſhes white, as is likewiſe the hair, which from being ſlightly tinged with yellow, aſſumes, in a ſmall degree, that particular hue, which is, more commonly than correctly, termed red. On looking at a ſtrong light, his eyes are affected with a twinkling motion, ſuch as is obſerved in the Albinos or Nyctalops; and from the axes of the two eyes not accurately converging, a ſlight degree of ſtrabiſmus is perceptible. It would ſeem therefore that it is a variation which ſtands much in the ſame relation with reſpect to the negroes, as the Nyctalops with reſpect to ourſelves. His ſkin being more than commonly irritable, is highly ſuſceptible of injury; and quickly riſes into bliſters, on his being expoſed to the open rays of the ſun.

The caſe of the woman is even more novel and ſingular than that of the boy; her peculiarity being the effect of an extraordinary change, and not of original conformation. She is about thirty years of age, and, until the laſt ſix or ſeven years, was of completely

ſable ſkin, differing in no reſpect from other negroes; nor do either her form or features now offer any thing remarkable, but, from the profoundeſt black, her ſurface is growing perfectly white. She is of good figure, has been always regarded as having a ſtrong and healthy conſtitution, and, for many years, has been employed as a waſherwoman in Mr. Cuming's family.

No probable cauſe is known, nor even ſuggeſted, for the change, but about five or ſix years ago, ſome white ſpots appeared upon her extremities, and, from that time, ſhe has been gradually loſing the natural blackneſs of her ſurface.

This uncommon change commenced in the parts moſt remote from the centre of circulation, and is ſlowly, though regularly, proceeding towards the parts nearer to the heart. The feet, hands, legs, and arms, have already loſt their ſable hue, and are now even whiter than thoſe of an European. Her noſe and ears are alſo white, and ſome patches of white are ſpreading upon the face, neck, and boſom; but her body yet remains profoundly black;

and although this extraordinary converſion ſeems to be progreſſively advancing, if it proceeds as ſlowly as it has hitherto done, it may be ſtill ſeveral years before the whole of the dark colouring be removed. Her hair and eyes retain their original blackneſs, and have not yet any appearance of participating in the change.

It is remarkable that the cuticle of the parts which have grown white, like the pale ſkin of the boy, is very ſubject to riſe into bliſters upon being expoſed to the ſun, while no ſuch effect is produced upon the parts which remain black.

The woman is ſtill in good health, and appears to remain entirely free from diſeaſe; as ſhe was, at the time this peculiar change began: but ſhe is extremely low and dejected concerning this event, which ſhe regards as the greateſt evil that could have befallen her. She has a great diſlike to be ſeen or to have queſtions aſked her, and more particularly by ſtrangers. When ſent for, that I might look at her, ſhe came to me with extreme reluctance, exhibited ſtrong marks

of agitation while ſhe remained, and went away in tears. She is the wife of one of Mr. Cuming's ſlaves, and has had ſeveral children, who differed in no reſpect from the offspring of other negroes.

LETTER XXV.

Little things ſometimes made important. Arbitrary conduct diſplayed towards a free Mulatto woman, called princeſs Changuion. Climate improved. March the fineſt month of the twelve. Muſquitoes unable to fly againſt the breeze. Roads dry and good. Frequency of the refreſhing ſhowers of Guiana. A ſhip arrives direct from England. Brings a ſupply of ſtores for the hoſpital. Author receives a copy of the new regulation for "improving the ſituation of regimental ſurgeons." Some remarks upon the army medical department. Sir Ralph Abercromby ſails from Martinique with an expedition againſt Porto Rico. Promotion of the author's friend Mr. Blackader.

Demarara, April 19.

You will not be ſurprized to hear that, although we are removed from the buſy metropolis of England, and all the gay ſcenes and adventures indicated in the *jeux d'eſprit*, *bons mots*, *doubles entendres*, and the many idly amuſing hiſtories which daily ſwell the columns of the newſpapers, we are not without our little cabals and intrigues, and anecdotes, and *particular heads* of news, which, in the abſence of more weighty occurrences,

often acquire a degree of importance they do not merit, and become the ſubjects of general converſation and concern. At preſent the prevailing topic is not devoid of intereſt. It concerns a mulatto woman called princeſs Changuion, regarding whom a high degree of intereſt has been excited, in conſequence of a proclamation which has lately appeared in the Eſſequibo Gazette, and which, has called forth a ſenſe of compaſſion, and of party feeling in her behalf.

She is a free mulatto, and was lately the favored dulcinea of a perſon high in office: and from circumſtances having rendered her name the general theme of the day, her crimes, her merits, and her ſufferings are warmly canvaſſed in every ſociety, and even thoſe who never ſaw, nor heard of her before, would ſeem, from their confident remarks to be intimately acquainted with every particular of her hiſtory and conduct. It has been thought that in conſequence of having committed an offence, which certainly would not appear to be of the firſt magnitude, the arm of power has been too ſeverely extended

towards her; and from the ſentence ſeeming to augur of prejudice, it is even hinted that private, or party pique, has had its influence in deciding the quota of puniſhment:—indeed if loud whiſper may be credited, her perſecutors have been exaſperated againſt her, in proportion as others have betrayed feelings of compaſſion towards her.

As the tale is told, ſome diſpute had ariſen between a Dutch dame, and this yellow *princeſs*, in which the white lady alleged ſome unjuſt accuſation againſt the mulatto, and otherwiſe ſo ill treated her as to provoke her to hold up her hand in a menacing manner; for which moſt heinous offence, the poor Changuion has been ſubjected to an arbitrary confinement, and ſentenced to be further puniſhed with a ſevere flogging—burning in the forehead—the loſs of an ear—and baniſhment. This you will readily perceive, was dealing out, to a perſon in freedom, the cruel treatment practiſed upon ſlaves, and for no better reaſon, than becauſe nature had been pleaſed to cover her with a yellow ſkin. The undue ſeverity uſed towards her has had

the effect of animating the benevolent exertions of thoſe who regard her as a victim of prejudice, and it being known that in ſome countries not only law and juſtice, but even deſpotic power might be ſoftened by gold, due inquiries were made, and it was underſtood that a thouſand guilders, properly employed, might ſoften, if not efface the decree. But, from the influence of a power oppoſed to the party, who thus intereſted themſelves in the cauſe of humanity, the puniſhment was ordered to be inflicted, at the very moment when the thouſand guilders were expected to be taken as the price of her releaſe. Still it happened that the iron arm of deſpotiſm was diſappointed of its blow; for, in the courſe of the night, preceding the morning when this unhappy female was to have been led out to puniſhment, ſhe contrived to effect her eſcape from confinement; and it is whiſpered, in a certain circle, that ſhe will probably find a ſecure place of concealment, until ſhe can meet with an opportunity of executing the latter part of her ſentence by *ſelf*-baniſhment.

You will be pleaſed to know that the climate upon this coaſt has lately become quite

ſalubrious, and that our ſick liſt has rapidly decreaſed, in conſequence of great numbers of patients being diſcharged, and but few admitted. I may alſo remark that we have found the month of March the moſt pleaſant, as well as the moſt healthy ſeaſon of the year; for not only has the weather been drier, the breeze ſtronger, and the air cooler, but we have been leſs ſubject to prickly heat, and leſs annoyed with muſquitoes. Happily theſe tormenting inſects have not been able to wing their light bodies againſt the increaſed ſtrength of the breeze. The roads have likewiſe been dry, and peculiarly pleaſant for travelling, which in theſe colonies is no trifling conſideration; for, in conſequence of their being low, and flat, and muddy, a moderate fall of rain leaves them deep in wet, and almoſt impaſſable.

Although the month of March has been the drieſt of all the twelve, ſome parts of the months of October, November, and February were likewiſe very fine, and the muddy roads were then, alſo, dry and ſmooth.

At length I may announce to you that a

ſhip is arrived direct from England; by which we are furniſhed with an ample ſupply of hoſpital dreſſes, bedding, and other ſtores, for the accommodation of the ſick. The arrival of theſe things is ſomewhat late, it muſt be confeſſed, but it will afford me the ſatisfaction of leaving the department well provided, and free from the many inconveniences, to which it has been, neceſſarily, expoſed while under my direction.

A copy has alſo reached my hand of the new regulations, for improving the ſituation of regimental ſurgeons, by doing away their medicine money, and other perquiſites, and conſolidating their pay into a regular and ſpecific ſum: likewiſe for eſtabliſhing their rank, and putting them upon a footing with military officers, in reſpect to quarters and field allowances. This is an important and well adviſed arrangement, and does honor to its projector. Indeed it is matter of ſurprize that the old ſyſtem of granting medicine money, and other perquiſites, ſhould have been ſo long continued, ſince it not only offered an inadequate reward, but held out encouragement to a neglect of duty, by leſſening the

emoluments of the ſurgeon, in proportion as he ſupplied the requiſite means to the ſick.

But I am ſorry to remark, that the new regulation, excellent as it is, from being limited to regimental ſurgeons, ſtops ſhort of its effect. To have rendered it complete in its operation, it ſhould have extended further, and have defined the rank of the different officers of the hoſpital ſtaff: and thus it might have become a general, and ſtandard regulation for the whole medical body; and have prevented many cavillings, and unpleaſant occurrences upon ſervice; while it would have given the department the reſpectability that is due to it, and have fixed its importance among military men. As it now ſtands, it is manifeſtly defective, from giving to a regimental ſurgeon a certain rank, of which it leaves him again diveſted, upon his receiving promotion to the ſtaff. The regulation might alſo have gone ſtill further, with additional benefit, and have fixed the title as well as the rank of the various medical appointments, for, at preſent, without a due regard to the military ſyſtem, the department is branching out into multiplied

diviſions, devoid of the appropriate diſtinctions of rank and duty.

It would perhaps be a taſk, which might puzzle the whole war office, with the army medical board included, to diſcriminate between the endleſs ramifications and ſubdiviſions which are made to diſplay themſelves in the army medical code; more eſpecially with reſpect to the higher appointments, under all the various degrees of phyſicians and ſurgeons, and deputies, and aſſiſtants, and *heads* and *principals*—ſuch as, "phyſician general, ſurgeon general, inſpector general of regimental hoſpitals, inſpector general of hoſpitals, deputy inſpector general of hoſpitals, aſſiſtant inſpector general of hoſpitals, director of hoſpitals, inſpector of hoſpitals, aſſiſtant inſpector of hoſpitals, field inſpector of hoſpitals, head of hoſpitals, principal medical officer of hoſpitals *," &c. &c. &c.

* Many of theſe worſe than uſeleſs diſtinctions have lately been done away, and ſome general regulations eſtabliſhed; but ſtill the ſyſtem is incomplete; and much yet remains to be done, before the medical department can take on that uniformity of character, or proceed with that uniformity of movement, which is requiſite in ſo important a branch of the military body.

By a late arrival from head quarters, we learn that the commander in chief has ſailed, with the expedition recently fitted out at Martinique, and ſuppoſed to be bound to Porto Rico. We hope ſoon to aſcertain its deſtination, by receiving happy tidings of its iſſue.

By the ſame occaſion we find that our late comrade Mr. Blackader has at length ſucceeded in the object of his wiſhes, and obtained promotion to a ſtaff appointment; but theſe, otherwiſe pleaſing, tidings come to us ſadly clouded by accompanying intelligence; for, as it too often happens in the army, news of one friend being promoted, is news of another friend being dead; and, on the preſent occaſion, we learn with ſorrow, that the path of promotion has been opened to Surgeon Blackader, by the removal of his comrade Ford to the great home of eternity.

LETTER XXVI.

Author addreſſes his friend on the anniverſary of his arrival in Guiana. Has much anxiety reſpecting the fate of his comrades at St. Domingo. Much rain falls in Guiana at the beginning of April; but the wet ſeaſon delayed. Author viſited by the medical practitioners of the colony. Remarks of Dr. E. concerning the yellow fever. His method of cure. His obſervations reſpecting the practiſe of medicine in general. His opinion regarding an intended publication by his friend. Author makes viſits to ſeveral gentlemen upon the coaſt. A Weſt India garden.

Demarara, April 23.

ON this day laſt year I firſt ſet foot upon the coaſt of South America; and when I take a retroſpect of all that has paſſed before me within the twelvemonth, review the urgent duties I have had to ſuſtain, and reflect upon the fatal numbers who have periſhed around me, I not only find that it has been the moſt buſied, and moſt perilous year of my life, but feel highly ſenſible how much I have cauſe of

thankfulneſs, in being ſtill bleſſed with health and ſtrength, to perform the various duties of my appointment.

With much anxiety I look to St. Domingo, and it would be a peculiar ſatisfaction to me, could I know that my comrades upon that ſtation, have arrived as happily at the end of the firſt year as myſelf:—but, from reports of the dread fatality in that quarter, I tremble for the fate of my friends; and, being now upon the eve of joining them, the idea that they may have fallen among the many victims of that inhoſpitable region, weighs upon my heart in accumulated heavineſs. I wiſh, yet dread to hear of them; and in the apprehenſion leſt tidings from thence might rob me of the delightful anticipation of again meeting thoſe I eſteem, I could almoſt court the preſent ignorance until my arrival; for unhappy news of my late aſſociates, would cloud my beſt hopes, and deprive me of what, alone, can render tolerable the thouſand troubles and annoyances of a long ſea voyage.

The date of my letter alſo reminds me, that at this period, laſt year, the wet ſeaſon

was ſetting in upon the coaſt of Guiana; and it calls to my recollection, that on the 23d of April, upon landing from our ſhips, we had to tramp our way to the town, at a mile diſtant, beſet with heavy rain and exceſſive heat, and almoſt up to our knees in mud and clay.

This year, we had a conſiderable fall of rain, about the beginning of the preſent month, which many imagined to be the commencement of the wet ſeaſon; but the ſhowers proved to be only thoſe of a lunar period, and the weather has ſince been dry and pleaſant, holding out to us the hope that, inſtead of anticipating the uſual time of its return, the invaſion of the wet ſeaſon may be delayed even latter than is common.

It uſually begins ſomewhat earlier in theſe colonies, than in the iſlands; and, alſo, in the dry ſeaſon, this coaſt is more frequently refreſhed with occaſional ſhowers. Theſe moſtly occur about the periods of ſpring-tides, and are not wholly ſuſpended even in the arid month of March: ſo that inſtead of ſuffering from long continued drought, no part of the year can be otherwiſe conſidered as a

dry ſeaſon, than comparatively with thoſe months which are almoſt inceſſantly wet.

With only the ſame proportion of rain, the ſeaſons in Guiana, from the flatneſs of the country, and the nature of the ſoil, will neceſſarily appear to be leſs dry, than in the iſlands, where the land is more hilly and irregular, and ſo diſpoſed as to favor either the percolation, or the paſſing off of the water. Here we have one wide and flat ſurface of clay, and the rain that falls lies upon the roads, and the fields, until the thirſty atmoſphere drinks it all up again; hence the wet, from every ſhower, continues to be viſible long after it has reached the ground, or it remains to be increaſed by new torrents; and from this circumſtance it is evident that the rains, which fall about the full and change of the moon, will cauſe more wet here, than in the iſlands, where from the ſoil being more dry and porous, all appearance of the ſhower vaniſhes with the cloud that emits it.

From this circumſtance, more than from the real quantity of rain that falls, ſtrangers arriving here from Europe, or the iſlands, particularly if they ſhould expect a total abſence

of rain during the dry months, might be led to imagine that, in Guiana, there is only one continued wet ſeaſon throughout the year.

Of late I have been honored with viſits from ſeveral of my medical brethren of the colony, with a view of aſcertaining the effect of the remedies uſed in the military hoſpitals, and particularly of mercury, in caſes of yellow fever.

From theſe gentlemen I have alſo had the opportunity of gaining much profeſſional information. Among them was Dr. E. from whoſe converſation and remarks I derived peculiar gratification. He is a man of talents and obſervation, and has profited of an extenſive experience. In ſpeaking of the yellow fever, he remarked that the medical men, who reſide in the interior of the iſlands and ſettlements of the Weſt Indies, have ſcarcely a better opportunity of knowing the real character of that diſeaſe, than thoſe "who practiſe medicine in the country villages of England." He conſidered thoſe only to be well acquainted with this dread malady, who had the opportunity of ſeeing it among Europeans, or Americans

newly arrived within the tropics. It had been his lot to witneſs it but too frequently, from being employed among the ſailors of the trading veſſels upon the river; and it appeared that he had obſerved with accuracy, and made himſelf well acquainted with the nature of the diſeaſe.

The doctor's experience had taught him to place very little reliance upon bark, mercury, or any of the remedies commonly employed; but he thought that he had witneſſed the moſt decided benefit from the Indian method of employing hot and cold bathing; and he obſerved, that, where the hot bath could not be conveniently provided, he had found equal advantage from ordering the head and neck to be waſhed with hot water, and immediately afterwards daſhing three or four buckets of cold water upon the patient. "The very ſudden relief obtained from this remedy," added the doctor, "is often equally aſtoniſhing and effectual."

Speaking upon medical ſubjects, generally, Dr. E. obſerved that he had been, at one time, a ſpeculative theoriſt, and, like

many other young phyſicians, had felt aſſured that he could preſcribe a curative remedy for every diſorder ..... *in his cloſet!* where, with vaſt wiſdom, he had reaſoned the human body into a mere machine, brought the practice of phyſic to a ſyllogiſm, and deduced the cure of every malady from the ſtricteſt logic! But, when called to the bed-ſide, he was ſurpriſed to find that the extinction of the diſeaſe did not follow the adminiſtration of his remedies, in the certain train of cauſe and effect: he, therefore, from ſeeing no error in his deductions, began to ſuſpect his poſitions, and to apprehend that he had been erecting fanciful ſyſtems, without any ſolid foundation. At length, when taught, by repeated diſappointment, to employ a more juſt reaſoning, he perceived that one great principle had oppoſed itſelf to the regular inferences he had expected to flow, in ſmooth current, from the data upon which he had ſo pleaſantly raiſed his hypothetical ſtructure: in ſhort he found that, inſtead of the human body being a mere machine of ſprings and wheels, man was poſſeſſed of *vitality*, and that, diſregarding this very important principle, he had long been grovelling in the dark,

bending facts to theory, inſtead of founding his theory upon the ſecure baſis of facts.

The ſame gentleman informed me that a friend of his, in theſe regions, was about to publiſh a book, upon medical ſubjects; againſt which he had urged every friendly expoſtulation, feeling aſſured, from an intimate acquaintance with the author, that the work could neither do him credit, nor the public ſervice; being, neceſſarily, a mere chamber production, and wholly deficient in that great requiſite, practical experience. But his remonſtrances were in vain. His friend had read himſelf into a belief of what he was about to write—and the world will have to judge of the production.

I have lately taken a ride to make ſome viſits at Mahaica, and at various eſtates upon the coaſt, and, in the courſe of my excurſion, I waited upon Mr. M'Kenzie, one of my fellow-travellers upon our late expedition up the river, at whoſe home I had the high gratification of exploring a rich garden of herbs, plants, flowers, and fruits.

It may ſurprize you to know that in a country where vegetation is ſo rapid, and ſo much under control, as upon this prolific coaſt, a well cultivated garden ſhould be ſo extremely rare, as to appear quite a novelty: but it too commonly happens that thoſe who court the ſmiles of fortune, by tilling the tropical fields, attend only to the cultivation of ſugar, coffee, and cotton, which plants are often ſeen growing up to the very doorway, or almoſt creeping in at the windows of the dwelling, not the ſmalleſt ſpot being reſerved for garden, pleaſure ground, or orchard. But the intelligent and accompliſhed proprietor of Luſignan has a mind ſuperior to the little penury which, neglecting the agreeable and ornamental, devotes only to the lucrative, and ſacrifices the common comforts of life to the ſole purpoſe of amaſſing a few additional dollars. Here the cotton is planted at a proper diſtance from the houſe, and the immediate environs are laid out in gardens, or enriched with fruits, ſhrubs, and other uſeful, or ornamental trees. Around the dwelling luxuriate, in a generous ſoil, the fruitful bread-tree, the cucumber tree, the cocoa-nut, the ſtately mountain-cabbage, the

grenadillo, the water-lemon, grapes of different ſpecies, mangos, figs, cherries, almonds, ſtar-apples, pines, and a multitude of other fruits; together with a great variety of the more rare, and beautiful plants and flowers of theſe regions.

All the comforts and advantages of an European garden it was here proved might be far exceeded in this bountiful ſoil, which ſo rapidly, and abundantly returns the labour beſtowed upon it. A long walk, finely ſhaded with grenadillos, the fruit of which hung in profuſion over our heads, had been planted only a few months before. The young ſhoots of fig-trees, whoſe parent branches are cut away every year, were quite loaded with fruit, and the grapes hung in heavy cluſters, from ſingle ſtems,—all the other parts of the vines being entirely pruned away. Indeed, ſo prolific are the plants, and ſo luxuriant their growth, that to enſure an abundance of fruit, it ſeems only neceſſary to commit ſeeds and ſhoots to the earth, and to cut out, from time to time, the greater part of the wood of the trees.

Amidſt the flowers I obſerved many that were highly fragrant, and of far more pleaſant odour than thoſe I had commonly met with in this country, and which had led me to believe that nature had very ſparingly ſcattered her perfumes, among the plants of this coaſt; and had I not ſeen the garden I am ſpeaking of, I might have left the colonies, impreſſed with an idea that the flowers of Guiana were wholly devoid of that delicious fragrance, for which thoſe of Europe are ſo highly eſteemed.

LETTER XXVII.

Author tranſcribes for his friend ſome notes on the general ſubject of the colonies. Unjuſt prejudice reſpecting the climate. General appearance of the coaſt and the eſtates. Roads. Colony paths. Mode of preſerving—alſo of procuring freſh water. Peculiar advantages. Seaſons. Form of government. Members of council—how elected—qualifications. Court of policy. Court of juſtice. Commiſſary court. The fiſcal. Diviſion of the country into diſtricts. Law concerning public roads and bridges. The land given by grants from the ſtates-general. Extent of the grants. Original ſettlements made far up the rivers. Britiſh enterprize leads the cautious Hollander to the ſea coaſt. This now ſpread with rich fields. Number of plantations upon the eaſt coaſt of Demarara. Average produce of a cotton eſtate. Stock required for its cultivation. Average produce and ſtock of a coffee eſtate. Average ſtock and produce of a ſugar eſtate. The colonies of Guiana a moſt valuable capture. Number of ſlaves in the colony of Eſſequibo and Demarara. Number poſſeſſed by an individual planter. Immenſe fortune acquired by Mynheer Boode. Concerning the wages of labour. Slaves let out for hire. Mode of compenſating medical attendance. Prices of proviſions :—of ſome colonial productions :—of ſome articles of common uſe. Further remarks.

Demarara, April.

THE commanding officer having required me to wait the reply of the commander in

chief, to a letter upon the ſubject of our recall from theſe colonies, I have availed myſelf of the interval, to make out a complete ſet of the returns and accounts of the whole hoſpital department, from the date of our arrival upon this coaſt; and having toiled at official papers for ſeveral weeks, with all the application of an office clerk, I feel that I cannot better devote my remaining leiſure, than in tranſcribing for your eye a few notes which I have collected, from time to time, upon the general ſubject of theſe colonies.

To an intelligent and inquiring mind, like yours, every thing that concerns mankind, and the countries we inhabit, muſt be ſtrongly intereſting—the general appearance of the territory,—the ſalubrity of the air—the common productions, and the returns of produce—the price of proviſions—the wages of labour—the laws and form of government—the diſtribution of property, and the adminiſtration of juſtice, cannot fail to be, at all times queſtions of importance, and hence, although I have not had an opportunity of acquiring minute or extenſive information upon theſe ſubjects, I offer no apology for

laying before you the few obſervations which I have been able to make—aſſured that you will not deem them wholly devoid of intereſt.

An unfavorable prejudice has been imbibed reſpecting the climate upon this coaſt; and a general opinion prevails, as well in the Weſt India iſlands as in Europe, that theſe colonies are very unhealthy: but however the fact may ſtand, upon a compariſon with the genial climate of Europe, it is certainly incorrect with reſpect to the neighbouring iſlands. Probably it is a prejudice that may date its origin from the earlieſt ſettling of the colonies; being formed either from a ſuperficial view of the low and muddy ſurface of the land; or in conſequence of ſickneſs having prevailed among the ſettlers, at the time of firſt clearing the ſoil.

Low and flat countries are uſually unfavorable to the health of man; but the inſalubrity does not reſult as a neceſſary conſequence of this form of the land: other circumſtances are required; for unleſs theſe conſpire, or, having conſpired, if they are removed, the fact no longer exiſts. A low

country badly cleared, not well drained, and only brought into partial cultivation, will, no doubt, be unhealthy: but a low country ſo well cleared and cultivated as Demarara, will not be ſickly, only becauſe it is low. A broken or mountainous country may preſerve its ſalubrity in great meaſure from its form, or the particular expoſure of its irregular ſurface: but a flat and low country ever requires the aid of induſtry; and can only be made healthy by the unceaſing toil of man: and, herein, is afforded a beautiful and ſtriking example of the all-providing care of our great parent—Nature: ſhe has made labour neceſſary to the well-being of man; and ſhe cauſes the earth to beſtow health as the conſequence of his toil; but if he neglects the ſalutary exertions of induſtry, ſhe compels the very fields, not only to reproach his indolence, but to puniſh him with ſickneſs. She has even gone further; for, theſe fields which, bereft of his health-inſpiring toil, will deſtroy him, ſhe has particularly empowered to reward him with plenty and riches, if he denies them not the attentions which ſhe has made neceſſary to the preſervation of his health.

You will have collected ſome knowledge of the general appearance, and the ſtate of cultivation of this coaſt, from the deſultory remarks I have already ſent you; but as I find a few words upon theſe ſubjects, among my general notes, I ſhall tranſcribe them, with the others, and you may read them or not as ſuits your leiſure. I have told you that on approaching theſe colonies from the ſea, the land is not viſible, until you come very near to the ſhore. The tops of trees only are ſeen; which appear to be growing out of the ocean. Before the coaſt was brought into cultivation, the foreſt reached very near to the edge of the water, and from the land being low, it was frequently overflowed by the tides. Now, there is a cultivated territory, a mile and half in depth, between the ocean and the foreſt; but this is ſo entirely flat, as wholly to eſcape the eye, and on ſailing towards the coaſt, the trees ſtill look as if they were growing within the edge of the ſea.

Perhaps none but the plodding induſtrious Hollander would have attempted to ſettle ſuch a country—where wood and water concealed every appearance of the land, and

ſeemed to bid defiance to all the powers of cultivation. Nor indeed were the early labours of the firſt ſettlers directed to this part of the coaſt. They ſailed far up the rivers, and eſtabliſhed the ſettlements upon their more elevated banks, at a diſtance remote from the ſea; not venturing to devote their induſtry to the immediate borders of the ocean, until they were prompted to it by the enterprize of more adventurous planters from the Britiſh iſlands.

The whole of the territory now brought into cultivation upon the coaſt, is *made*-land. It has been placed—I had almoſt ſaid created, by the hand of man; and is only preſerved to his uſe by conſtant toil. Numerous ditches and canals are cut to drain the water from the common ſurface; and the land that is planted, is only the mud and clay thrown out of theſe channels.

An eſtate, or plantation, uſually conſiſts of a long piece of flat land, about a quarter of a mile in width, and a mile and half in depth, running back from the ſea to the woods. It is bordered by wide ditches, and traverſed by

numbers of others, and is thus formed into many ſeparate diviſions, ſomewhat reſembling an aſſemblage of beds—ſuch as are uſually made in our Engliſh gardens, for the planting of aſparagus.

A deep bank of earth, called a dyke, is thrown up in front, to defend the eſtate from the encroachments of the ſea; and a ſimilar bank is raiſed at the back, to prevent it from being inundated by the waters, which overſpread the flat ſurface of the foreſt. The ditches unite by frequent interſections, and from communicating with the ſea, they are filled by the flowing, and emptied by the ebbing of the tide. Thus the eſtate undergoes, as it were, a daily draining, and all noxious and ſtagnant accumulations are prevented. In addition to theſe frequent waſhings, it is made one of the annual duties of the eſtate, thoroughly to ſcour out the ditches; when the mud that is removed, forms a coating of manure, and ſerves to raiſe, while it enriches the ſoil; which from cultivation, from the falling of heavy rains, and from the flowing of the tides in the numerous channels around it, were it not for this ſupply, would ſoon wear

to a level, and be again a prey to the encroaching waters.

From a number of theſe eſtates lying contiguous to each other, the coaſt is formed into an open, though narrow, territory, and the border of the ſea ſwells into one ſplendid cotton field, a mile and half deep, and of nearly ſeventy miles extent. The ſurface being quite level, this immenſe track of cultivated land opens at once to the eye, and the ſcene is not leſs rich than novel. Perhaps a plain ſo ſpacious, a ſoil ſo fertile, and a produce ſo abundant, cannot be met with in any other country.

Like the ſoil in cultivation, the land which forms the public roads is only the mud and clay procured from the ditches that border them. They are of courſe flat, like the reſt of the territory, and running at the bottom, or along the ſides of the eſtates, they form ſtraight lines, and right angles, throughout the whole extent of the plantations, interrupted only by the wooden bridges which croſs the numerous ditches and canals.

In allotting the land, a certain width of

territory between each two eſtates, is, with much wiſdom, reſerved to the colony, in order to form what are here termed colony paths. Theſe not only ſerve as common ways, from the front to the back of every plantation, but in each of them is cut a public canal, which runs from the ſea, throughout the whole depth of the cultivated land, to the foreſt. By this proviſion many uſeful purpoſes are anſwered:—the public convenience is promoted, and each individual planter is benefited.

The colony path not only offers itſelf as a common road, from the ſea to the buſh, but preſerves a free communication for any future ſettlers, who may engage in the cultivation of land at the back of the preſent eſtates; while the canal, by means of flood-gates, lets off to the ocean, the water that lodges in the foreſt, and prevents it from overflowing the cultivated fields; bringing at the ſame time, a ſupply of freſh water, for the uſe of the negroes and the cattle; and affording to the planters a ready means of conveying the produce of their eſtates to the ſea.

Although the general face of the colonies be ſuch as to convey an unfavorable impreſſion, the peculiar mode of cultivation protects them from the ills, which, upon a firſt view of the ſoil, might ſeem to be threatened. From the frequent uſe of the hoe, in clearing the crops, ſcarcely a weed is left to grow up and decay; from the numerous channels, which interſect each other, the rain that falls is carried off, without becoming ſtagnant; from the flowing of the tide, every thing noxious, brought to the ditches, is ſpeedily removed; and from an annual ſcouring, the channels are kept peculiarly free from impurities; hence, notwithſtanding that it is flat and low, the ſoil which is brought into cultivation is not ſuffered to grow ſwampy: no offenſive accumulation is formed; nor does the mud-impregnated water of the ditches remain to grow putrid, and emit unhealthy vapours. The ſoil is always freſh; the channels are free, and the waters frequently renewed; it conſequently follows that the evils, which commonly proceed from low and neglected ground, are in a great meaſure prevented.

When I mentioned as one of the advantages of the public canals, that they furniſh a ſupply of freſh water for the ſlaves and the cattle, I might have added, that the paucity of good freſh water is one of the greateſt inconveniences that is known in theſe colonies; for although the canals bring freſh water in plenty, it is ſo ſtrongly impregnated with infuſed leaves, and other vegetable matters, in conſequence of coming from the foreſt, that it is very unpleaſant, both to the eye and the palate, and as the negroes expreſs it "*no good for Backra*," although theſe poor beings are, themſelves, obliged to ſhare it with the cattle.

The river water is brackiſh to the diſtance of many miles from the coaſt: ſprings there are none; and wells would only ſupply a water which could not be uſed. Thus circumſtanced, the expedient of preſerving the offerings from the clouds naturally ſuggeſted itſelf; and accordingly, tanks, or ciſterns, have been conſtructed for this purpoſe at almoſt every eſtate. Some families preſerve the rain water in large earthen jars, in which, with much care, it is kept good during the whole

period of the dry ſeaſon. Thoſe who are not poſſeſſed of either jars, or ciſterns, are obliged to content themſelves with the ſtrongly macerated infuſion of the foreſts, called "buſh-water;" or to ſend parties many miles, with boats and caſks, to obtain freſh water from the diſtant ſtreams of the rivers.

You will imagine from the nature of the land, that the crops upon this coaſt muſt be very abundant. They are ſo in fact; and are far more regularly productive, than in any others of our ſettlements in the Weſt Indies. Theſe colonies likewiſe poſſeſs the great advantage of being free from hurricanes and earthquakes, and from that miſchievous inſect, the borer, which in the iſlands ſo often deſtroys the canes. They are alſo exempt from great droughts, which are ſo frequently injurious to the iſlands, and, in conſequence of being open to the breeze, they are leſs liable to frequent and ſudden changes of temperature:—neither hills, nor rocks, nor woods offer any impediment to the grateful trades, which kindly come to them from the ocean, and are ſcarcely ever abſent throughout the whole annual circle.

The year is commonly divided into two wet and two dry ſeaſons. The long wet ſeaſon begins in April, declines in Auguſt, and ceaſes in September. The roads are then dry, and the weather fine until the middle of November; when the ſhort wet ſeaſon ſets in, and continues till January. From the middle of January until the latter end of April, the weather is dry, the atmoſphere clear and pure, and the climate bright and genial. The roads are then good, the breeze is ſteady and powerful, the air comparatively cool, and the temperature ſubject to little variation.

In theſe colonies laws are made, and acts paſſed by the governor and council—the governor having two votes.

The members of council are choſen by keizers, or electors; theſe being appointed by the inhabitants—each inhabitant, poſſeſſed of property, to the amount of ſix hundred guilders per annum, being entitled to a vote.

To qualify a perſon for being elected a a member of council, it is requiſite that he be

a freeholder, and a proteſtant; that he ſhall have reſided three years in the colony; and that he underſtand the Dutch language.

The council framing laws, is called a court of policy; and this court is of a mixed form, reſembling a combination of the houſe of aſſembly, and the governor and council of the Britiſh colonies.

The court of juſtice, like the legiſlative and executive, is compoſed of the governor, and of counſellors elected by the keizers. This court takes cognizance of all civil and criminal cauſes, and admits of no appeal, except to the Sovereign.

A commiſſary court is eſtabliſhed for the adjuſtment of petty offences, and for the deciſion of all queſtions of property below the value of 600 guilders. This court conſiſts of two members of the court of juſtice, who are appointed in rotation, the Governor nominally preſiding. The fiſcal is the active officer of this court. It is his duty to announce, or impoſe the fines; but he has no power to levy

them. If they are reſiſted, he ſerves the parties with a citation, and they appeal to the commiſſary court.

The fiſcal is the great law officer, and may be conſidered as the attorney and ſolicitor general of the colony. His powers and priveleges are very conſiderable, and his influence, of courſe, extenſive.

The country is divided into a certain number of diſtricts, with a burgher captain appointed to each, on whom devolves the more immediate execution of the public regulations, whether made for the particular convenience of the reſpective diſtricts, or for the common benefit of the colony at large.

It is a regulation—or call it a law of the colony, that each planter ſhall keep in repair that portion of the public road, together with its bridges, which croſſes or paſſes at the end of his own eſtate. But inſtead of overſeers, or ſurveyors of the road being appointed, it is made the duty of the fiſcal, to travel throughout the colony, twice in every year,

for the expreſs purpoſe of inſpecting the roads and bridges, and impoſing fines upon the owners of ſuch as are not found to be in good repair.

In theſe viſits of inſpection the law requires that he ſhall be accompanied by a burgher officer, and a clerk from the government ſecretary's office; the former to approve, the latter to witneſs ſuch approval, and to note the fines impoſed. This control would ſeem to be highly neceſſary, as certain proportions of theſe fines become the perquiſite of the fiſcal, and ſerve to enrich his own purſe.

The planters, upon receiving notice of the fines, thus levied, have the privilege of reſiſting the payment of them: in which caſe the fiſcal refers the queſtion to the commiſſary court, and himſelf pleads the cauſe, as the principal law-officer of the colony. But it frequently happens, that by offering a third, or a half of the fine, the affair is compromiſed—the fiſcal ſilenced—his pocket ſatisfied—and all further appeal to the court of juſtice prevented.

The regulation, has, however, the effect of keeping the public roads in very excellent repair; for, knowing how very improbable it is, that the leaſt defect can eſcape the penetrating and intereſted eye of the fiſcal, each planter is particularly attentive to the highways and the bridges *.

All grants of land, in theſe colonies, are made from the States General of the United Provinces; and they commonly conſiſt of lots, either of 250, or 500 acres, laid out in the above mentioned regular form, which is favored by the ſituation, and flatneſs of the land. In front, towards the ſea, each eſtate is about 1200 Dutch † feet in width; and in length, back from the ſea into the foreſt, or

* This regulation, which certainly had its advantages, has been found a ſource of cavil and vexation, and it has ſince been made an order of government that the fiſcal ſhould have his ſpecific reward, and the whole of the fines be devoted to the ways and means of the colony. But it is to be feared, that this arrangement may make him leſs zealous in executing the duty, and that the roads and bridges may not, henceforth, be found in ſuch excellent repair.

† The Dutch weights and meaſures exceed by about $\frac{1}{11}$ part thoſe of England.

buſh 9000 feet. In Berbiſche many of the grants are 1800 feet wide, and 12,000 feet deep. On granting the land it is ſtipulated that the plantation ſhall be advanced to a certain ſtate of cultivation by a given period, under the penalty of being forfeited at the expiration of that period, if not cultivated to the extent ſpecified; and by way of encouragement to the planter, a ſecond depth, further into the foreſt, of equal extent, and immediately at the back of the other, is uſually granted to the perſon who holds the firſt depth from the ſea, ſo ſoon as it ſhall be certified, by the two neighbouring planters, that two-thirds of the firſt grant are brought into good cultivation, and that the new grant will not be in any wiſe injurious to them. Some gentlemen are now in poſſeſſion of theſe double plantations of 18,000 feet; but, for the moſt part, only the ſingle eſtates of 9000 feet are yet made obedient to the hoe.

Thus you will perceive, that theſe rich colonies are merely a narrow ſtrip of land, upon the border of the Atlantic Ocean, bounded by a deep foreſt, which extends

acroſs the whole continent to the Pacific Ocean.

The Dutch upon originally eſtabliſhing the ſettlements, as I have already ſaid, cultivated only the banks of the rivers, and until within the laſt twelve or fifteen years, ſcarcely any plantations were formed upon the coaſt. It is ſince this period that Engliſh adventure has taught the plodding Hollander that he had overlooked his beſt intereſts, in not beſtowing his induſtry upon the immediate border of the ocean; and the ſea ſhore already exhibits one rich and fertile field, nearly throughout the whole extent, from the river Demarara to the river Berbiſche.

It is now believed that, in the courſe of a few years, the borders of the rivers will be totally abandoned, and, inſtead of being enriched with coffee and ſugar, will be left a prey to the wild woods. In ſuch event a very ſhort time would efface every mark of human induſtry, and ſtrangers would be unable to diſcover that the arm of man had ever extended thither; for ſo rapid is the progreſs

of vegetation, that the land is only held ſubſervient to uſeful purpoſes by the unremitted toil of ſlaves, which being once withdrawn, it would ſpeedily revert to its original wildneſs, and again become a part of one vaſt and ſavage foreſt.

The colony of Berbiſche was the firſt ſettled; but that of Demarara has proceeded with far the moſt rapid improvement. The number of eſtates now in cultivation upon the ſea-coaſt, from the Demarara river to the border of the colony of Berbiſche, is one hundred and ſixteen; all of which are planted with cotton, except the "Kitty" belonging to Mr. T. Cuming, which has been recently planted with ſugar *. This part of the colony is divided into four diſtricts, the Burgher Captains, preſiding over which, are all Britiſh planters, viz.: Mr. Lochland Cuming, Mr. Rogers, Mr. Telfer, and Mr. Sutherland.

It were ſcarcely neceſſary to remark to you that coffee, cotton, and ſugar are the

* Since theſe notes were written the number of eſtates has much increaſed, and ſeveral that were only planted with cotton, now produce the moſt luxuriant crops of ſugar.

great, and almoſt only commercial productions of the colony. The average produce of the 80 beſt cotton eſtates, is calculated at from 50,000lb. to 60,000lb. weight, each, of cotton per annum. In the cultivation of this plant *one prime negro* is conſidered as ſufficient ſtock for *two acres* of land. The average number of cotton buſhes, planted upon an acre, is ſix hundred. Each buſh is calculated to produce eight ounces of cotton; and the average price of cotton, ſold in the colony, is eſtimated at fifteen ſtivers per pound.

The requiſite proportion of ſtock, for an eſtate cultivated with coffee, is *two negroes* to *three acres* of land. The number of coffee buſhes uſually planted is four hundred and fifty per acre. Each buſh is calculated to produce 1¼lb. of coffee—and the average price, when ſold in the colony, is from ſeven to eight ſtivers per pound.

The cultivation of ſugar is the moſt expenſive, and requires conſiderably the greateſt proportion of ſtock—*one prime negro* being neceſſary to *every acre* of land. The average

return of an eſtate, planted with ſugar, is 50l. ſterling per acre, being 2000l. weight of ſugar at four-pence per pound, and rum in proportion.

The domeſtic fowls and animals ſeen in theſe colonies are the ſame as thoſe of Europe, but we find that the Moſcovy duck, and the Guinea fowl are much more commonly uſed than in England. Only very few of the birds, or beaſts of the ſurrounding woods, have yet been domeſticated, and theſe, not for the purpoſe of utility, but amuſement — the monkey and parrot tribes being almoſt the only ſpecies ſeen about the houſes. The horſe, the ſheep, the dog, and the other animals which are uſually aſſociated with the family circle, and made ſubſervient to man, are not the native inhabitants of theſe foreſts; but, poſſibly, there may be others which might be brought into ſocial habits, and made to contribute to our wants. Domeſtic birds it is known there are; for we occaſionally ſee, in that ſtate, the native ducks of the rivers, and what is here called the powys, or turkey of the woods, which is a more ſtately bird, and

nearly as large as the common turkey of Europe.

With reſpect to the Natural Hiſtory of the country, a wider field ſeems to be opened in botany and zoology, than in mineralogy, for while the animal and vegetable worlds are abundantly ſtored, ſcarcely ſuch a thing as a ſtone or a pebble can be found in any part of the colonies yet cultivated. I lament exceedingly that my occupations will not allow me more time to devote to theſe ſubjects; and, on this ground, I have particularly to regret being ſeparated from my baggage, having left behind me two large boxes of books, the loſs of which I feel very ſeverely.

Delightful as the ſtudy is, perhaps no extenſive progreſs can be expected to be made in the different branches of the natural hiſtory of the country, ſo long as it ſhall continue to be viſited only from views of pecuniary gain. Even the enthuſiaſm which attaches to new diſcoveries, can induce but few to toil in ſuch a climate, in the mere purſuits of ſcience; and, accordingly, we ſee that it is the object

of thoſe, who do hazard their perſons, to devote themſelves to the means of acquiring a competent fortune, to enable them to retire, as ſpeedily as poſſible, to enjoy the fruits of it under a more temperate ſun.

It is not only with exceſſive heat and diſeaſe that thoſe who viſit theſe regions have to contend! The extreme annoyance, from whole tribes of inſects and reptiles is even leſs ſupportable, to many, than the exhauſting warmth of the climate. In truth I may ſay it is ſo to myſelf, for the general buzzing, the biting, ſtinging, creeping, and crawling of theſe tormenting objects, diſtreſs me far more than the heat, or any apprehenſion of diſeaſe. We are bitten, ſtung, or overrun by day, and by night, and expoſed to inceſſant pain and diſcomfort, unleſs conſtantly upon the watch, or carefully protected by ſome defenſive covering; being perpetually beſet with myriads of flies, ants, muſquitoes, cockroaches, lizards, Jack Spaniards *, fire-flies, centipedes, &c.&c.; which, in addition to their bites and ſtings, fly in our faces, crawl about our perſons, and

* A large ſpecies of waſp.

make an intolerable buzzing in our ears. In an evening, and particularly after rain, the confuſed noiſe of theſe humming hoſts is very peculiarly diſagreeable. It conveys the idea of breathing in an atmoſphere of ſounds, or amidſt one great and animated hive, where every created inſect joins in full chorus—the enormous frog of the country croaking the baſe, in a voice which reſembles the loud bellowings of an ox.—Vaſtly agreeable, methinks I hear you exclaim, for any one troubled with nervous ſenſations, or what are vulgarly called the fidgets!

From the great fertility of the ſoil; from the uninterrupted regularity of the crops, and their abundant produce; and from the immenſe extent of territory capable of being brought into cultivation, theſe colonies may be regarded as the moſt valuable capture which has yet been made during the war, and perhaps that which it might be moſt to the advantage of England to preſerve, to herſelf, upon the return of peace.

The number of ſlaves, at this period, in the united colony of Eſſequibo and Dema-

rara, is fifty-five thouſand *. The greateſt number poſſeſſed by any individual is nearly 2000. Theſe are the property of Mynheer Boode, a planter living upon the weſtern coaſt of the Demarara river; a man of immenſe fortune, who is ſaid to have been originally a drum-boy, in the Dutch ſervice, and to have come to this colony from Surinam, whither he had arrived with the troops from Holland. Here, by a ſteady perſeverance in ſucceſsful induſtry, he has been enabled to acquire a fortune, which is repreſented as princely indeed; it being ſaid to amount to nearly 50,000l. ſterling, per annum.

Of the daily wages of labour it were difficult to ſpeak, with any degree of accuracy, in a country where the work is done by ſlaves. I have already mentioned to you an inſtance of the exorbitant price of wages among the labouring claſs of carpenters, and this may ſerve as a ſpecimen of the rate of hire given to others. The lower claſſes of white people are moſtly mechanics, or artiſans, and theſe obtain high and extravagant wages in all

* Already increaſed to upwards of 80,000.

parts of the Weſt Indies. White labouring peaſants, or huſbandmen, are here unknown. The mulattoes, likewiſe, are, for the moſt part, bred to ſome handicraft employment, and very few of them are ſeen to toil their daily round in the field: the tilling of the land, thererefore, and all the menial, and lower degrees of labour, are performed by the negro ſlaves, who themſelves, equally with the implements of their toil, are the ſole and diſpoſable property of their maſters; wherefore, in order to aſcertain the wages of labour, it would be neceſſary to calculate the coſt of the ſlave, his proviſions, and clothing—the expence of the implements he uſes—the riſk of ſickneſs, and of caſualties—and the intereſt of money, and thence to draw the ratio of expenditure, or the ſum employed to procure his daily toil.

But it ſometimes happens that perſons buy ſlaves, who have neither land for them to cultivate, nor any other means of employing them; they therefore let them out to hire, by the month or the year. Some even purchaſe negroes expreſsly for this purpoſe; and lay the foundation of their for-

tunes by ſelling the toil of Africans, who are thus made to ſweat drops of gold for their owners, under the laſh of other maſters. The profit obtained from the labour of a ſlave, who coſts about eighty pounds, is uſually from twenty to twenty-two guineas per annum, all expence of food, and of medicines when ſick, being defrayed, throughout the term for which he is engaged, by the perſon who hires him.

Upon making minute inquiry I underſtand that the hire of a negro may be fairly eſtimated at about two guilders for a ſingle day; if engaged for ſeveral weeks, at one guilder per day; and when hired for a longer period, it may be rated at about 250, or nearly 300 guilders per annum.

The compenſation of profeſſional labour bears a due proportion to the high profits acquired by the merchants and planters. From the population being very limited, and the inhabitants not yet crowded into towns, the medical practitioners are ſeldom rewarded with regular fees for their attendance; but

are commonly allowed an annual ſalary for their ſervices—thus eſtabliſhing a kind of fixed income, which depends upon the number of eſtates regularly under their inſpection, and not upon the number of ſick, whom they may have to viſit.

PRICE OF PROVISIONS

IN THE COLONY OF DEMARARA.

	Dollars.	Bits.	£.	s.	d.
Bread (rarely to be purchaſed)		1 *per lib.* or	-	-	5
Pork - - - -		2½ *do.*	-	1	½
Beef or mutton (ſeldom to be procured)		3 or 4 *do.*	-	1	6
Milk (worſe than in London)		1 *per pint*	-	-	5
Cheeſe (brought from England)		4 *per lib.*	-	1	8
Salt butter - - -		4 *do.*	-	1	8
A Turkey - - -	5 or 6	-	1	5	0
A Duck - - -		12 -	-	5	0
A Fowl - - -	1	-	-	4	8
Ham (brought from England) -		4 *per lib.*	-	1	8
Loaf-ſugar (coarſe) - -		6 *do.*	-	2	6
Tea (green) - -	4½	*do.*	1	1	0
Apples (brought from America)		4 *per doz.*	-	1	8
Onions (*do.*) - -		1 *do.*	-	-	5
Small tarts (ſuch as are ſold in England for a penny) - -		1 *each*	-	-	5
Madeira wine - -	1	- *per bottle*	-	4	8
Claret - - - -	1	- *do.*	-	4	8
Porter - - -		6 *do.*	-	2	6

PRODUCTIONS OF THE COLONY.

		£.	s.	d.
Plantains - -	1 or 1½ *per bunch*	-	-	5
Yams - - -	1 *per gal.*	-	-	5
Eddoes - - -	2 *do.*	-	-	10
Sweet Potatoes -	1 *do.*	-	-	5
Oranges (brought to the door)	1 *per doz.*	-	-	5
Pines *do.* -	2 *for three*	-	-	10
Indian corn - -	3 or 4 *per* 100 *heads*	-	1	6
Graſs (freſh cut, of which a horſe will eat 5 or 6 bundles in a day)	1 *per bundle*	-	-	5
Cotton - -	3 *per lib.*	-	1	3
Coffee - - -	1½ *do.*	-	-	7½
Sugar (freſh made in the country)	*do.*	-	-	4

ARTICLES OF COMMON USE.

	Joes.	Dollars.	Bits.		£.	s.	d.
A coat (ready made, and of very common cloth)	2½	-		or	4	13	4
A shirt (ready made and coarse)		6	-		1	8	0
A hat - -	1	-	-		1	17	4
A pr. of boots (American, and of very bad leather) - -		7	-		1	12	8
A pr. of shoes (very bad)		3	-		-	14	-
A saddle (plain) -	3 or 4	-	-		7	7	-
A Bridle (plain and neat) -		17	-		3	19	4

Cabinet wares, and household furniture are extravagantly dear. All articles of iron, or polished steel soon become spoiled, in consequence of the sea air; hence it is common to have the hardware tinned or plated—Even keys, knives, cork-screws and the like, whether left in the room or worn in the pocket, are soon covered with rust, and without constant care, are rendered useless.

LETTER XXVIII.

Concerning the ſeaſoning, or yellow fever.

April.

As you expreſs a ſtrong intereſt regarding the malady which has committed ſuch afflicting ravages in our army, and deſire to have a letter devoted excluſively to the ſubject, I now proceed to lay before you a ſummary, which, although it may not afford you any additional information, may ſerve as a recapitulation of what has been already tranſmitted to you, from time to time, in my frequent communications. I ſhall confine myſelf principally to what concerns the nature of the diſeaſe, feeling that a minute detail of the ſymptoms, and mode of treatment would not only be leſs intereſting, but perhaps very tedious to you.

After all that I have been able to obſerve, with reſpect to this dread complaint, I think that, regarding it as a malady of the Weſt India colonies, it may, correctly, be ſaid to be the effect of climate, operating upon exotic

bodies. It is the fever of the country—an endemial malady, which attacks thoſe, moſt ſeverely, whoſe general vigour, and whoſe firmneſs, or denſity of fibre offer the ſtrongeſt reſiſtance. To look for it in ſhips and veſſels, or to ſtrain the eye acroſs the ocean, in order to fix its birth-place upon the oppoſite coaſt of the Atlantic, or to trace its deſcent from the ſhores of the Indian ſeas, were to overlook the reality in ſearch of a phantom.—It needs no foreign parent: the prolific earth is its mother—its father the bright God who governs the day.

When Europeans firſt take up their reſidence in the Weſt Indies, it is uſual for them, ſooner or later after their arrival, to undergo an attack of fever, which, in times of peace and tranquillity, when, as they are called, the "*new comers*" are but few, is termed a "*ſeaſoning-fever*"—but, in times of war, when, from great multitudes arriving at the ſame period, its deſtructive effects are more ſtriking, is baptized with the terrific name of—"*yellow fever*:"—but, whether denominated *ſeaſoning*, *yellow*, *Bulam*, or *Siam*, or marked by any other appellation, it is only the common bilious

fever of hot climates: and it appears under an intermittent, a remittent, or a continued form, according to the ſoil and ſituation of the place; or the habit of body, and other circumſtances of the perſon attacked. In negroes and creoles it is frequently an ague—in thoſe who are in a degree acclimatés a remittent—and in *new-comers* a *continued*, or as it is commonly termed, a *yellow*-fever—preſerving, in each caſe, a diſtinct type throughout its courſe; while, in other inſtances of its attack upon Europeans, it ſhifts its form, and runs its progreſs with the moſt uncertain irregularity: in proof of which I may remark that it has happened to myſelf to receive newly arrived ſoldiers into the hoſpital, at one and the ſame time, with this ſeaſoning malady, under all the varieties of its intermittent, remittent, and continued form; and, although each has been differently attacked, all of them have died, in the courſe of only a few days, with every ſymptom of the moſt malignant *yellow*-fever.

Nature, in her all-preſerving care, hath endowed the human frame with the power of accomodating itſelf to all the various climates,

upon the habitable regions of our globe; yet hath ſhe more expreſsly adapted our organs to the particular climate in which ſhe hath ſtationed us: ſo conſtituting the nice and delicate movements of the animal machine, that we cannot, without peril, expoſe ourſelves to ſudden or violent tranſitions.

To the inhabitants of different regions is given a ſomething of conſtitutional difference, which it were difficult preciſely to define: but it belongs to a certain original conformation, creating a difference of fibre or ſtamina, which more particularly befits the body for the ſpecific region, in which it is deſigned to move. Yet, while much is attributed to our parent Nature, it ought not to be forgotten that habit is our foſter-mother, and that ſhe follows nature very cloſely, in her influence upon the human frame; and hence it is that by long reſidence, and ſimilarity of purſuit, ſo near an approach to this ſpecific and original ſtructure may be acquired, as to promote healthy action, in a being removed to a foreign, and even to an ungenial climate: ſtill, this is only the yielding of a body originally different; for the aſſimilation is never ſo com-

plete as to be in all reſpects the ſame. The conſtitution of a negro from Africa, or the Weſt Indies, never becomes entirely Britiſh, although he reſide in England the greater part of his days: and however much an European, by long reſidence in the Weſt Indies, be brought to reſemble a creole, he can never acquire, preciſely, the conſtitution of a native: ſome marks of original conformation will ſtill remain, and a ſomething, even in his general appearance, to diſtinguiſh him.

Nor is this difference of organization confined to the human ſubject: other animal bodies, and alſo vegetables differ in their ſtructure and external appearance, in different climates. The wool of ſheep, removed from a northern region to the Weſt Indies, becomes hair: and the almoſt taſteleſs potatoe of Europe aſſumes a ſtrong ſaccharine flavour from tropical culture.

The influence of the atmoſphere, not only in different climates, but under its various changes in the ſame climate is, at all moments, and in all countries, far greater than common opinion ſuppoſes: nor has the attention of

medical men been ſufficiently directed to this circumſtance, although it is of great magnitude. Hypochondriacs, perſons ſubject to rheumatiſm, or aſthma, and thoſe afflicted with painful thickenings of the cuticle, (uſually termed corns,) become exquiſitely ſenſible of the ſlighteſt variations in the ſtate of the atmoſphere; and from hence it may be concluded, that it cannot but operate, at all moments, with a powerful effect upon the tender fibres of our delicately organized veſſels; and if, in our native region, the influence be ſo conſiderable, how infinitely important muſt it be, when the body is expoſed to the ſtronger impreſſions of an unnatural climate

"..... where the ſun, with downward torrid ray,
Kills with the barb'rous glories of the day."

Without entering more minutely into the ſubject, which might ſwell my letter into a volume, ſuffice it to remark, that there appears to be a certain gradation in the tone, or firmneſs of the animal fibre, as we proceed from the hotter through the more temperate regions; not following in exact mathematical proportion, but ſufficiently manifeſt to form ſome

ſtandard for general obſervation; and, perhaps, ſufficient to ſanction the aſſumption that the denſity or laxity of the human fibre bears an intimate alliance with the temperature of the climate, with reſpect to heat or cold; although it may be influenced, likewiſe, in no inconſiderable degree, by other circumſtances; ſuch as the dryneſs or moiſture of the atmoſphere, the ſtate of the ſoil, the manner of clothing, and the habits purſued. In the colder regions towards the poles, the fibre is firmer, the circulation of the fluids ſlower, and the ſecretions more languid; while in the warmer regions, near the equator, the fibre is lax, reſpiration quicker, the circulation more rapid, and the ſecretions more copious, and more ſpeedily performed. In order, therefore, to fit the conſtitution of a polar inhabitant for a tropical climate, or to accommodate the ſyſtem of a tropical inhabitant to a polar atmoſphere, it is needful that the change ſhould be gradual, that the neceſſary denſity or laxity be induced, with as little riſk as poſſible of diſorganization, and conſequent diſſolution*.

* It is probable that our troops might be rendered nearly as effective for ſervice in the Weſt Indies, as in Europe, were it poſſible, in all caſes, to prepare them for

It not only happens that the inhabitants of cold climates ſuffer, on being transferred to the tropical regions—the negroes can as ill ſupport the change to a northern atmoſphere, and accordingly they are frequently the victims of being brought to Europe; for, amidſt the cold of our winter, all their energies ſeem to be deſtroyed, and their faculties benumbed. They ſeldom live to old age, but, commonly, ſink into marasmus, or are cut off by early conſumption.

Fever, exceſſive heat, violent paſſion, or any other cauſe which greatly, and ſuddenly hurries the circulation of the fluids, diminiſhes the tone and energy of the living animal fibre, and deprives it of that degree of firmneſs which is neceſſary to health; but, by gradually habituating the body to the change, a high degree of increaſed circulation, or a conſiderable diminution of the original denſity of fibre may be ſupported, without any conſequent

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the climate by ſlow and gradual approaches; as for inſtance, by firſt letting them ſerve, for a time, at Gibraltar, and afterwards employing them, for a year or two, in the more windward iſlands, ſuch as Barbadoes or Antigua, before they were ſent upon duty to the other colonies.

derangement of ſtructure—the increaſed action of the veſſels, the augmented velocity of the fluids, and the ſubſequent laxity of fibre, induced by great heat, or high fever, may be borne, provided they are not ſo ſudden, nor long continued, as to cauſe diſorganization.

We have many familiar examples which teſtify the effect of original conformation, and the powerful influence of habit upon the animal body, with reſpect to its ſtate of health or diſeaſe. If a perſon accuſtomed to live in the gloom of London ſhould expoſe his face, for only a ſhort time, to the full rays of a Brighton ſun, the ſkin would be ſeparated as if by the application of a bliſter; but if a hardy ſhepherd of the downs were to lie upon the hills, with his face open to the broad ſun, throughout the whole day, not the ſmalleſt part of the cuticle would be diſturbed.

A negro, to whom the climate is congenial, can run over the hills in the Weſt Indies, for many hours together, without ſuffering the ſlighteſt inconvenience: but if an European of more unyielding fibre, and but lately arrived within the tropics, were to fol-

low him in ſuch a courſe, it would be more than probable—it would be almoſt certain, that, within a few ſucceeding hours, a fever would complete the diſorganization, and ſend him to the grave.

So, the fluids of a racer may be hurried violently through his veſſels, without any injury to the natural organization: but if an unpractiſed horſe, of a different original conformation, were to be taken from the cart and made to gallop, with all poſſible ſpeed, over a courſe of four or ſix miles, it is probable that from the increaſed impulſe, and the reſiſtance of his unaccommodating fibre, fever, diſorganization, and death would ſpeedily enſue.

In cold or temperate climates, bulls are baited, and hares hunted, in order that the ſound texture of their fibres may be broken down, and the muſcles made tender, by their dying in the fever of increaſed and violent circulation.—This is a fact ſo well known to all ſportſmen, that a hunted hare is always preferred to one that has been ſhot, or taken by other means.

Epicures let their meat hang after it is killed, until the atmoſphere has effected the ſame purpoſe, by a different proceſs, and it be made tender by a decompoſition, or partial putrefaction. But in the Weſt Indies, it is common to ſee the animal alive in the market, and to have its joints ſmoking upon table the ſame day at dinner: it is ſlaughtered, dreſſed, and eaten, without the fleſh growing cold; and yet there is no complaint of the meat being hard or tough.

Theſe remarks will ſerve to lead your attention more particularly to the ſubject of climate, and to the effects of habit and original conformation; therefore, without attempting to enter more particularly into all the various changes, which the febrile action produces in deſtroying life, or the ſpecific mode in which theſe changes are effected, I may proceed to ſtate a few other general circumſtances, which will ſhew the application of what has been already ſaid to the ſubject in queſtion, viz.—the continued, or *yellow* fever.

Creoles and negroes are not ſubject to the fever in its continued, or moſt malignant

form; but, when it does invade them, it more commonly aſſumes a remittent or intermittent type.—In theſe claſſes the original conformation, aided by a conſtant expoſure to the heat and atmoſphere of theſe regions, has eſtabliſhed a due ſtate of fibre, and given to the body a certain congeniality which empowers it to continue its healthy action, amidſt all the circumſtances of climate and ſituation.

Europeans, who have reſided during a period of ſeveral years in the Weſt Indies, are ſeldom attacked with the fever in its continued form; but when it ſeizes them, it commonly aſſumes the type of a remittent.—In perſons of this claſs, the body, from long expoſure to the climate, has become creoliſé or acclimaté, approaching to the conformation of the natives, by having the original firmneſs of fibre reduced to the appropriate ſtandard for continuing the healthy action, under expoſure to preternatural heat.

The ſtrongeſt men—thoſe of the moſt denſe or rigid fibre are moſt ſubject to the high degrees of the continued, or *yellow* fever;

and are moſt frequently, and moſt rapidly deſtroyed by it.

Women, children, convaleſcents from former malady, and thoſe who have been reduced by the uſe of mercurial remedies are leſs frequently the objects of its attack; and when it does ſeize them, it is commonly milder, and leſs rapid in its progreſs.—In theſe claſſes, the ſtate of the animal fibre, either from original conformation, or from eventual circumſtances, more nearly approaches to that of the creoles and natives.

In North America, the inhabitants, who conſtantly reſide in the moſt ſouthern ſtates, are ſeldom attacked with the fever in its more violent, or continued form; while thoſe of the north-eaſt ſtates are deſtroyed by it in great numbers: but, even in theſe ſtates, it is remarked that the fever more readily ſeizes ſtrangers from Europe, or peaſants from the interior provinces, than the natives of the towns, in which the diſeaſe prevails.—Theſe facts are peculiarly ſtriking, and they ſeem to admit of ready explanation. The inhabitants of the ſouthern ſtates, from reſiding in con-

ſtant heat, are acclimatés, and, in conſtitution, approach nearly to the creoles or natives of the Weſt Indies: but thoſe reſiding in the more northern ſtates, although expoſed to a very high degree of heat during the ſummer, can never become creoliſés, on account of the intervening winter, which, annually renews the prediſpoſition, and creates a ſuſceptibility of the diſeaſe—ſtill, from reſiding, during part of the year, in exceſſive heat, and remaining, at all times, in the atmoſphere of their towns, even the inhabitants of the place, where the diſeaſe prevails, are, in ſome degree, leſs ſuſceptible of the moſt malignant form of the fever, than ſtrangers from Europe, or peaſants from the provinces, whoſe more denſe and rigid fibre renders them in a peculiar manner prediſpoſed.

From theſe remarks, it would ſeem that the preſence of contagion, is in no degree, neceſſary to the production of this fever. Indeed its invaſion is governed by circumſtances very oppoſite to all the known laws of contagion: for, in proportion as the body approaches the creole ſtructure, ſo is it able to ſupport the change of temperature, and to

reſiſt the fatal effects of the ſeaſoning malady. If the conſtitution, either from natural organization, or from long reſidence, be aſſimilated to the climate, *i. e.* if it be reduced to the common ſtandard of the creoles, it has nothing to apprehend from the diſeaſe:—but if it be not, the fever will, aſſuredly, make its attack, without waiting for any ſuch cauſe as contagion.

Moreover, if it can be aſcertained, that certain claſſes of people are moſt liable to be attacked, and if it can be proved that there is a certain gradation, according as they have been more or leſs expoſed to the influence of climate, it were equally unneceſſary and unphiloſophical to call in the aid of a power, the application of whoſe laws it were impoſſible to reconcile with the appearances obſerved. No diſeaſe of known contagion is influenced by the circumſtances which are, daily, ſeen to govern the progreſs of the yellow fever; if, therefore, we are to regard contagion as the parent of this diſeaſe, it muſt be a contagion of a very uncommon and peculiar appetite; for it is a circumſtance, both ſingular and unprecedented, that an active and wide-ſpreading

contagion, prevailing in any particular country, ſhould, expreſsly, avoid the inhabitants of that country, and only lie in wait for ſtrangers; and, further, that ſhould theſe not chance to arrive, even for many years, this inſatiate devourer, not reliſhing the food of her own country, ſhould not once require ſuſtenance, nor ſtir abroad for ſupport, but content herſelf to faſt, throughout the whole period, and, again, ruſh forth, with undiminiſhed vigour, the very moment that ſtrangers appear! I think I might ſay, with the greateſt correctneſs, that if no ſtranger, from a colder climate, ſhould viſit the Weſt India colonies for the ſpace of five, ten, or any given number of years, that no inſtance of the yellow fever, diſtinct from the bilious remittent fever of the country, would be known, during that period; yet, if a body of men, unaccuſtomed to the climate, ſhould arrive from Europe, in the month of July or Auguſt immediately ſucceeding, a conſiderable proportion of them would be ſeized, and probably deſtroyed by this diſeaſe, before they had commemorated the firſt return of a new year: but can it be ſuppoſed that a moſt ſubtile and active contagion would thus remain latent, for any ſpecified term, amidſt

whole hoſts of natives, ſuddenly, and as it were, impulſively, reſume all its deſtructive powers, as ſoon as a body of more robuſt foreigners ſhould come within its reach?

In England, the harveſt-men and ſtrangers, who go into the fens of Kent, or Lincolnſhire in the Autumn, are more readily attacked with the endemial fever of theſe provinces, than the inhabitants, who conſtantly reſide in the atmoſphere which cauſes it; yet we do not learn that, during the prevalence of any contagious malady in theſe diſtricts, the contagion cautiouſly avoids the men of Kent or Lincolnſhire, to lie in wait for ſtrangers; nor, perhaps, will any phyſician venture to aſſert that the Kentiſh fever is produced by contagion.

It would ſeem more probable that the contagion of any particular country ſhould regard the ſubjects of that country, in ſome degree, as her appropriate prey. The plica Polonica ſhuns not the people of Poland—nor the ſibbins thoſe of Scotland—neither have the yaws any diſreliſh for the creoles, or the Africans. But what ſeems moſt ſurprizing,

is that this lady of choice appetite, who deſpiſes ſuch common food, as the languid blacks of the Weſt Indies, when ſhe takes a ſail down to America, as if her appetite were ſharpened by the voyage, will, occaſionally, condeſcend to feaſt upon a fine ſtout negro of the United States.

This is a fact, which is totally irreconcileable upon the principle of the diſeaſe proceeding from contagion.—The negro of the Weſt Indies, from always living in a high degree of heat, has no ſuſceptibility: but the negro of America acquires a prediſpoſition from the re-recurrent cold of the winter. The fibre of the one is relaxed, and yielding—of the other denſe and reſiſting.—In the ſame way it is explained why the inhabitants of Louiſiana, Georgia, and the Carolinas, are leſs ſubject to the diſeaſe, than thoſe of Virginia, Pennſylvania, and New York. Did the fever ſpread itſelf by contagion, we know of no cauſe why it ſhould extend its ravages to the north inſtead of the ſouth—why it ſhould ſeize whites in preference to blacks—why prefer a robuſt European to a languid creole;—nor why it ſhould have a diſtaſte for the ſable race of the

Weſt Indies—yet reliſh the negroes of North America.

It is not a law of contagion to make its attack upon the moſt robuſt and vigorous people:—more commonly it aſſails thoſe of tender fibre. Were any given number of ſtrong healthy men, and the ſame number of children to be expoſed, at the ſame time, to the influence of the contagion of ſmall-pox, meaſles, or ſcarlatina, common obſervation informs us that the children would be found to be moſt ſuſceptible of the impreſſion, and attacked in the greateſt number: but the very reverſe of this would be the caſe were they to be expoſed, in a ſimilar manner, to the cauſe producing the yellow fever—the men would be found to be moſt ſuſceptible, and a greater proportion of them would fall victims to the diſeaſe.

Not only does this fever attack Europeans, newly arrived in the Weſt Indies, in preference to creoles, negroes, and thoſe who, by a long-continued reſidence, have become acclimatés; but even among theſe unhappy Europeans, who chance to ſuit her appetite,

ſhe ſtill has her partialities; for the moſt healthy and robuſt, and in general, thoſe who are the earlieſt ſubjected to great exertions, and the high degrees of temperature, are ſooner ſeized, and more rapidly deſtroyed, than thoſe of laxer fibre, or thoſe who have the opportunity of becoming more gradually acclimatés.

But the "New-comers" if expoſed to the yaws, the cra-cra, or any other diſeaſe of decided contagion, are not found to be more ſuſceptible than the creoles, or the negroes: although, with regard to the bites of muſquitoes and other inſects, the difference of effect upon the Europeans, and the people of the climate, is as peculiarly marked, as it is with reſpect to the yellow fever. The ſmall puncture made in the ſkin of a robuſt European by a muſquito, or a ſand fly, frequently becomes inflamed, tumefies, breaks into a ſore, ſpreads into a malignant ulcer, and, ultimately, robs the hardy ſon of the North of his life—while the languid creole, or the negro, quietly lets the inſect bite, without apprehending any of this ſad train of conſequences.

Seeing that the fever can, unqueſtionably, be produced without contagion, ſome contend that, in its paſſage through the body, it generates a matter, which is capable of producing the diſeaſe, by being diffuſed in the atmoſphere, and that it, thus, becomes infectious. But even in this wideſt ſenſe of the term, I cannot conſider it to be either a contagious or infectious malady; for it does not appear that, by any inherent proceſs, the living human body has the power of generating the appropriate *pabulum* neceſſary for the production or ſupport of this fever; or that the diſeaſe, in its progreſs through the human frame, begets a poiſon *ſui generis*, which may be conveyed from one perſon to produce the diſorder in another.

The contagious or infectious fever which proceeds from diſtempered human exhalations, is a diſtinct malady. The yellow fever has a different origin—is different in its ſymptoms—and requires a different mode of treatment. They both have their different degrees, and the mild typhus, and typhus gravior of England are not more alike than the continued and the remittent fever of the Weſt

Indies. Perhaps the mild, and the confluent ſmall-pox are more unlike: yet no one denies that either is ſmall-pox—nor doubts that both are derived from the ſame cauſe—the ſame ſpecific virus.

If the medical attendants, and the (white) orderlies, who have been employed in the hoſpitals, have ſuffered from the fever: ſtill, they have only ſuffered in common with the officers and ſoldiers, who have not been quartered near the hoſpitals; and, as their proportion of duty and fatigue has been uncommonly great, it were not to be expected that they could eſcape better than their comrades.

But I have ſaid that this fever does not attack the blacks of the Weſt Indies; I may, therefore, mention a remarkable fact, which, more than all others, would ſeem to militate againſt the doctrine of the yellow fever being, originally, a contagious, or becoming, in the courſe of its progreſs, an infectious malady, viz.—that, of the multitudes of black men and women, whom I have had occaſion to ſee employed conſtantly in the hoſpitals, and who have executed all the

menial duties about the ſick, the dying, and the dead, I never yet knew even a *ſingle inſtance* of any one of them either male or female taking the diſeaſe. Perhaps no one will contend that this would have happened had the hoſpitals been equally crowded with patients in ſmall-pox, meaſles, ſcarlet fever, the common jail fever, or any complaint decidedly infectious *.

The yellow fever prevails moſt com-

* In the year 1793, a body of emigrants from St. Domingo, amounting to upwards of 300 in number, who had made their eſcape from that colony, under all the circumſtances of the moſt afflicting depreſſion, arrived at Philadelphia, at the time when the yellow fever raged with its utmoſt malignity: yet, not one of them was attacked with the afflicting malady, which was then deſolating the town. And, as if expreſsly to make this fact the more ſtriking, it likewiſe happened that the emigrants who arrived at the ſame diſtreſſing period, from Ireland, the States of Germany, and other parts of Europe were attacked by the fever, even in greater proportion than the Americans themſelves.—It is not the property of any contagion to exhibit ſuch marked partialities. The autumn temperature of Philadelphia was congenial to the emigrants from St. Domingo: they were acclimatés, and therefore not ſuſceptible of the diſeaſe; while thoſe from Europe, being the inhabitants of colder regions, were in a peculiar degree prediſpoſed.

monly, and moſt extenſively, at the decline of the wet ſeaſon of the year, when the rains and the ſun irregularly alternate, and cauſe unſettled weather; and this is alſo the period when the bilious remittent, and the ague appear among the creoles and negroes. In the midſt, or at the very height of the wet ſeaſon, and during the finer dry ſeaſon, the fever, in all its ſhapes, is far leſs common: likewiſe in the dry and elevated parts of the country, which are open to the breeze, it is out of all proportion leſs frequent than in low damp ſituations, in the vallies, and about the openings of the rivers. In North America it is principally, nay almoſt excluſively a diſeaſe of the low and crowded towns, ſituated upon the borders of the rivers, and the bays of the ſea; and is ſcarcely known in the higher, or more interior parts of the country.

The great favoring circumſtances, therefore, appear to be a high degree of temperature, and a moiſt ſtate of the atmoſphere; to which may, perhaps, be added the ill choſen ſituation of the towns: but, from the particular ſeaſon in which it ſpreads its ravages, and from all the hoſt of concomitances,

it would ſeem that we are to regard ſome miaſma, or unwholeſome exhalation, as the true *pabulum* of the diſeaſe.

At the high period of the wet ſeaſon the ditches and canals are full, and the brooks and rivulets fluent, ſo that the noxious exhalations are neither ſo readily formed, nor ſo eaſily taken up into the atmoſphere; and, in the dry ſeaſon, theſe deadly vapours are either chaſed away by the breeze, or rendered effete by the intenſe rays of the ſun—but during the intermediate period, at the decline of the wet ſeaſon, every circumſtance tends to favor their production, and to promote their diffuſion and ſuſpenſion in the ſurrounding air.

The fever is moſt readily generated in new colonies, where the land is only partially cleared of its wood, badly cultivated, and the half-drained ſoil left to exhale its noxious vapors into the ſurrounding atmoſphere. In the older colonies, where the foreſts have been long cut down, the land brought under general cultivation, and its ſurface more opened to the breeze, it is found to be leſs prevalent.

Examples of this are ſeen in the old iſlands of Barbadoes and Antigua, contraſted with thoſe of Grenada and Trinidad. The former are well cleared, and univerſally tilled, and from ſituation, as well as culture, freely expoſed to the influence of the trade wind;—in theſe, the diſeaſe but very ſeldom appears. The latter are not yet brought under general cultivation, but are partially covered with wood, and the atmoſphere is damper, and leſs purified by the breeze:—here, the fever frequently and fatally rages.

In new ſettlements where the land is recently brought into cultivation, and not well cleared, or drained, and particularly in the vicinity of the towns or habitations, which are commonly placed at the loweſt, and moſt inſalubrious ſpots, for the convenience of commerce, the drainings of the higher lands, and often the filth of rivers, or of bays and inlets of the ocean, together with decayed leaves, plants, and roots, and, in ſhort, the whole *exuviæ* of the vegetable world collect, remain, and grow putrid, and, in ſuch ſituations, the very weeds, and coarſer plants, become rank and exuberant, and, growing up only to decay, add to

the fermenting maſs, which, by holding the impure waters ſtagnant, accumulates and creates a noxious ſwamp; and, thus, is generated the hideous Python, who, though often conquered by the darting rays of Apollo, again uplifts his deadly front, and can only be ſubdued by the more ſteady and perſevering induſtry of man.

When the effect of climate and ſituatiod ſhall be fully underſtood, and duly eſtimated, the yellow fever may be no longer the ſcourge of our merchants, our planters, and our armies: yet, after the long and fatal experience the world has had, it is equally lamentable and ſurprizing that men ſhould ſtill blindly continue in error, with reſpect to the ſituations choſen for their towns and dwellings. Contrary to their better knowledge, they prefer the convenience of commerce to the more important advantages of health, and fix their habitations, as it were expreſsly, upon the moſt unhealthy points of the globe. In every nation, and almoſt every colony, ſtriking examples might be ſelected of the ſtrange folly and neglect with which we regard a circumſtance of ſuch ſerious magni-

tude. Armies, periſhing with fever, or dyſentery, have been ſnatched from threatened deſtruction, by change of ſituation; and countries, almoſt meriting the reproachful term peſtilential, have been rendered ſalubrious by attentions to the ſoil: ſtill, on the ſcore of health, much remains to be done, by mankind fixing their reſidence where the atmoſphere is leaſt expoſed to noxious exhalations. But alas! commerce, and her proſtitute ſuite, riches, diſſipation, and luxury, deafen the loud calls of the fair Hygeia, with her more virtuous train, eaſe, tranquillity and happineſs; and while man remains ambitious, and wealth be made the public road to honors and diſtinctions in ſociety, health will continue to be only a ſecondary object of his conſideration. It is in the province of the phyſician to expoſe this fatal error—to philoſophy it belongs to remove it.

I would remark that the fever of theſe regions ſeems, in many reſpects, to be governed by the ſame circumſtances as the endemic fever of Kent and Lincolnſhire, in England, and indeed when it attacks the natives of the country, it even aſſumes the ſame type and

ſymptoms: and I much ſuſpect that if it could happen that the temperature of theſe provinces ſhould continue as high as from 80° to 90° during the ſummer, and heavy rains ſhould fall in July, you would have *yellow fever* in the months of Auguſt and September: but, while the general heat of the ſummer ſhall continue below 70°, there can be no fear of yellow fever being generated in England—and ſtill leſs of it being imported; for this is juſt as improbable as that the Kentiſh fever ſhould be carried off in a Scots trading veſſel, and ſpread among the inhabitants of Edinburgh, whoſe rocks, and ſtreams, and healthy mountains preclude its viſitation.

In order to exhibit, in a more ſtriking point of view, the ſimilarity, or I might ſay the identity of the intermittent, the remittent, and the yellow fever of the Weſt Indies, and to ſhew that they are only different degrees of the ſame diſeaſe, I may briefly enumerate the more prominent points in which the reſemblance is obſerved.

1. They run indiſcriminately into each other—a quotidian, or a remittent, ſometimes

becoming a malignant yellow fever; and a yellow fever ſometimes degenerating into a remittent, or an intermittent.

2. They are all ſeen to be connected with a derangement of the biliary ſyſtem; and a common ſequel of each, is a chronic affection of the liver.

3. They all prevail, moſt extenſively, at the ſame period of the year; viz. the decline of the wet ſeaſon.

4. A bilious vomiting is common to them all.

5. They are all, occaſionally, attended with a yellowneſs of the ſkin, and the eyes.

6. In their relapſes, and frequently in their firſt attack, they all bear a cloſe alliance with the lunar periods.

7. The intermittent, the remittent, or the continued type, or in other words, the milder, the intermediate, or the more malignant form is aſſumed, according to the ſtate

of vigour, the period of reſidence in the climate, and other circumſtances of the ſubject attacked.

8. They all, occaſionally, affect the ſame perſon various times.

With reſpect to the alleged novelty, — the recent production or importation of the yellow fever, it appears to be an error, which may be explained away, by the circumſtance mentioned above; viz. that during a period of peace and tranquillity it is leſs frequent, and paſſes under the milder name of ſeaſoning fever; but from recurring in a time of war, it creates new alarm, and conſequently iſſues forth with a new appellation. Its exiſtence is, no doubt, coeval with the diſcovery of the colonies; for it is mentioned by ſome of the oldeſt authors who have written upon the ſubject of the Weſt Indies, and is pointedly noticed by Pere Labat, an author who himſelf experienced an attack of it in the year 1694. Were it fit to offer a conjecture with regard to its duration, I might ſuggeſt that, in all probability, it will continue to prevail, ſo long as greedy lucre ſhall impel the inhabitants of

cold climates to pay their devotions to Plutus, by a pilgrimage to tropical fields; unleſs theſe fields ſhall be ſo improved, by tillage, as to deſtroy the ſerpent, and deprive the fever of the aliment neceſſary for its ſupport.

LETTER XXXIX.

The commandant receives final inſtructions for the author to proceed to St. Domingo. A collection of Indian ſpecimens embarked for England. News arrives of the defeat of the combined fleet off Cape St. Vincent—alſo of the invaſion of Wales by 1500 Frenchmen. Hoſpital officers ſubſiſt upon ſalt rations. Author laments not being able to make an improved report reſpecting the ſurgical patients. Next to fever, ulcers moſt fatal to the troops. Different effect of the climate upon thoſe newly arrived, and thoſe accuſtomed to the country. Guiana not leſs healthy than the iſlands. Proportion loſt not ſo great. Caſualities during one year. Rain and lightening, frogs, thunder, and muſquitoes imply the ſetting in of the wet ſeaſon. The rainy ſeaſon later in the iſlands than in Guiana.

Demarara, May 2.

THE die is caſt! and I am irrevocably deſtined for St. Domingo. The commandant received the reply of the commander in chief on the 25th ult., and I am directed to take my departure from the coaſt of Guiana by the earlieſt opportunity. This may, therefore, be the laſt letter I ſhall ever addreſs to you, from the continent of South America.

Anticipating theſe inſtructions I had prepared caſes for my collection of Indian ſpecimens; which I have now packed up, and embarked on board the ſhip Homer, for London, hoping ſome day to meet them again in the neighbourhood of Bedford Square. Fortunately, after long expectation, the model of an Indian houſe, which the friendly and hermit-like Bercheych had promiſed to procure me from the Bucks, arrived juſt in time to be encloſed—and as it is complete in furniture and utenſils, I ſhall look forward with much pleaſure to the period, when I may have the opportunity of explaining to you, in England, the appropriate uſes of all the little apparatus which you will find attached to it.

I am alſo indebted to the commandant, Col. Hiſlop, for the model of an Indian houſe, brought to him by the Bucks, which you will likewiſe find in the collection embarked on board the Homer.

We have juſt received the news of Sir John Jarvis having defeated a great fleet of the enemy, with a very inferior number of ſhips, off Cape St. Vincent. The guns have

been fired, and we all join in cordial rejoicings upon the occaſion; notwithſtanding that the tidings come to us accompanied with the intelligence of an invaſion of Wales . . . by *full fifteen hundred* Frenchmen! What can be the object of ſuch-like expeditions? Is it hoped that theſe handfuls of men can diffuſe themſelves throughout the country, and delude Engliſhmen to forego their own freedom, in exchange for French ſlavery—or are they merely hordes of vile Brigands, vomited by the *great nation* upon our ſhores, inſtead of being conſigned to the executioner?

It has happened, for ſome weeks paſt, that we have again been very particularly indebted to the king, for our allowance of daily food. Unable to procure freſh proviſions in the colony, and none having been imported, the hoſpital meſs has been wholly fed with the ſalt rations iſſued from his Majeſty's ſtores; and, no alternative remaining, we have been compelled to ſatisfy ourſelves with a diet of ſalt beef and peaſe ſoup, improved with the occaſional variety of peaſe ſoup and ſalt-pork.

I ſhould ſtand accuſed of neglecting our contract, were I to omit noting to you that, in a late proviſion-hunting excurſion, our party met two Dutch ladies upon the road, travelling, with great ſtate, in a chaiſe drawn by ſix naked ſlaves, inſtead of horſes. This was quite a ſcene of novelty, it being one of the toils of ſlavery we had not before chanced to witneſs: nor indeed had we heard that it was practiſed.

It is matter of much concern to me not to be able to improve the report of our ſurgical patients, before I bend my path from theſe colonies, and from the hoſpitals, which have ſo long been the objects of my anxious care; but, ſo far from this being the caſe, it is deemed neceſſary to embark another body of theſe unfortunate ſufferers on board the ſhips now going to England.

Next to fever, ulcers have been the ſevereſt ſcourge of the troops, and in both of theſe maladies we have witneſſed multitudes of inſtances, in ſad proof of the fatal influence of climate upon our patients:—while an European has been cut off in a few hours, by that ardent, and mercileſs deſtroyer, the yellow fe-

ver, a coloniſt has experienced a ſlight attack of the bilious remittent, and a negro had to ſupport the ſimple paroxyſm of an ague: or, while an Engliſh ſoldier has lingered, and died, from only a ſlight ſcratch or excoriation, the African, and the creole, have rapidly recovered from the wideſt and moſt perilous ulcers.

If I ſtate to you the reſult of twelve-months experience, as it now appears before me, in a return I have prepared for the commander in chief, it is not with a view of increaſing your terrors, reſpecting the fatality of this climate, but rather of counteracting, in your mind, a prejudice which I have already ſaid prevails but too extenſively, regarding the inſalubrity of Demarara, and, generally ſpeaking, of the whole coaſt of Guiana.

I obſerved to you before, that the commonly accepted opinion, that theſe ſettlements were more unhealthy than the Weſt India iſlands ſeemed to be incorrect; and if I now remark that in the courſe of a year our loſs has amounted to nearly 350 men,

the returns from even the moſt favored of the iſlands, I have much reaſon to ſuſpect, will bear me out in regarding the aſſertion as decidedly erroneous: for we are taught to believe that few, if any, of the detachments of the very numerous army, under the command of Sir Ralph Abercromby, have eſcaped with ſo little loſs, as the diviſion ſerving in theſe colonies. In ſome of the iſlands we know that the mortality has been frightfully greater—in few—perhaps in none, has it been leſs. Yet, alas! it is, at beſt, but a melancholy conſolation, that we ſhould find cauſe to rejoice in having loſt only one-fourth of our number!

In the courſe of laſt week, and particularly on the 26th and 27th of the late month of April, we had many heavy ſhowers of rain, accompanied with much thunder and lightening, alſo with the loud croakings of hoſts of enormous frogs, and the diſtreſsful viſitings of thick clouds of muſquitoes; all of which are regarded as ſtrong indications of a returning wet ſeaſon. That the thunder and lightening have been leſs frequent, the muſquitoes fewer, the breeze ſtronger, and the loud bellowings of

the frogs leſs annoying, during the dry ſeaſon, than they had been during the wet weather that preceded it, is a fact, to which the eyes and ears of all here can bear teſtimony; but in how far theſe circumſtances recurring with the ſhowers of a lunar period, may be indicative of the returning invaſion of the long wet ſeaſon, I am not able to pronounce with equal certainty. Probability might ſeem to favor the opinion: yet the rains have again diminiſhed, and the beſt obſervers do not poſitively declare our pleaſant dry ſeaſon to be at an end; and, therefore, as the wet ſeaſon is commonly later in the iſlands, than upon this coaſt, I do not altogether deſpair of reaching Martinique in time to ſee that iſland during the continuance of fine weather *.

* Since writing theſe remarks, the author has had opportunities of ſeeing the yellow fever upon many different ſtations, and he may obſerve, that each occaſion of increaſing his experience has tended to confirm the opinion, which all the circumſtances connecting with it, in Guiana, forced upon his mind, reſpecting the nature of the diſorder. It has now happened to him to have ſeen this fever at Barbadoes—in the colonies upon the coaſt of South America—at Martinique—at Jamaica—at Cape St. Nicholas mole, and Port au Prince in St. Domingo—

and at Norfolk, upon the coaſt of Virginia, in North America, in all of which places, he has obſerved it to be one and the ſame diſeaſe, ſlightly differing in ſome of its features, according to circumſtances of ſituation, of ſeaſon, or of conſtitution. He has alſo ſeen much cauſe to believe, that early venæſection is the remedy moſt to be relied upon in the cure.

LETTER XXX.

Author's adieu. He takes his paſſage in a veſſel bound for Martinique. Feels anxious to reach St. Domingo. Promiſes to continue the habit of guiding his pen to his friend, provided his "Notes" are duly honored.

Demarara, May 5th.

THE ſhip, which is to convey our ſurgical invalids, not having failed, I gladly embrace the opportunity of offering you a word of kind adieu, before I take my departure. To-morrow I am to embark from this coaſt, together with ſuch of the gentlemen of the St. Domingo hoſpital ſtaff, who have been ſpared from the grave. The veſſel, in which we have taken our paſſage, goes only to Martinique; how at at what time we may proceed from thence to St. Domingo will, in all probability, depend upon circumſtances, not within my control: but, for many reaſons, I ſhall be anxious to reach the iſland, whither we are deſtined—hoping, there, to hail my comrades; to meet whole packets of long-expected letters from my friends in England; to regain my books and

baggage; and to become ſettled in a regular routine of profeſſional duty. When, or from whence you may hear of me again, is among the uncertainties with which I am ſurrounded:—but I ſhall continue to lift my pen to your idea, at the penſive hour of retiring to my birth for the night; and if your valued remembrances ſhall tell me that you are not already tired of your correſpondent—that he has not been too faithfully obſervant of your dictates — you may perhaps be troubled as heretofore: but, remember that this will reſt entirely with yourſelf; for I have a ſad terror, leſt I ſhould draw more "*Notes*" than you may be willing "*to accept.*"

Adieu! adieu!

FINIS.

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